

Of the Imitation

OF CHRIST.

**Three, both for wisdom, and good
lines, most excellent bookes, made**

170. yeeres since by THOMAS

of KEMPIS, and for his worthi-

nes thereof oft since translated

out of Latin into sundrie lan-

guages by diuers godlie

and learned men.

Now newlie corrected, translated, and

with most ample textes, and sentences

of holie Scripture illustrated by

THOMAS ROGERS.

John 14. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life.

Marke 8. 38.

Who soeuer wil folowe me, let him forsake him

selfe, and take up his crosse, and

folowe me.

1. Cor. 11. 1.

Folowe me, as I folowe Christ.

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D O M I N O

Thomæ Bromlæo, Equiti aurato,
non minus egregia pietatis, mo-
rum, ac literarum laude, quàm
Summi in Anglia Cancel-
larius amplitudine
illustri;

BRITISH



THOMAS ROGERVS

os verè quidem graues de Christo
nitando libellos, a se è Latino con-
uersos, castigatos, & varijs, ac multi-
plicibus ss. Scripturæ sententijs insignitos,
in grati animi testimonium
consecrauit.





The first Epistle of the
Translator, touching Christi-
an Imitation in generall, to the faith-
full Imitators of our Saviour
Christ in Eng-
land, S.

Who entred into a due con-
sideration of mans nature,
shall easily perceiue, that
most strangely it is addic-
ted vnto Imitation: & though in truth
we should liue by laws, not by examples,
yet that examples doe more moue then
do lawes, seruants in a family, souldiers
in an Army, subiects in a common weale
may confirme what I say. For seruants
will imitate their Masters, Souldiers
their Captaines, subiects their Gouer-
nours a, be they good, be they bad, you
get they praise, or get they infamy, pro-
fit or hurt thereby: thinking their liues
to be a law, and that to bee well doone,
which is done after their example.

Man by
nature is
giuen to
imitation.

4 Ec. 10. 1

6 Hieron.

1. Whereby I doe note, first, that they in Epist. ad

A 3

should Heliodor.

The first Epistle

should haue great regarde vnto themselves, who are any way either for birth or for office, or for calling, whether it be spiritual or temporall, better than other men. For they cannot sin without great hurt and danger to the Common-weale, say I of them, as once spake Cicero of
 c Cic. A&C. Iudges c, Whence it is, that mighty
 2 in Verie. men, shall mightily bee tormen-
 d Wil. 6.6 ted d.

Secondly, that seeing our nature is such, wee are to take speciall heed whom we follow or imitate. For every one may not be followed, neither shall the vngodly behauiour of others excuse vs before God. For we must all appeare before
 2 2 co. 5. 10 the iudgement seat of Christ e, to re-
 Reu. 22. 12 ceiue according to our owne deeds f.
 fpl. 61. 12 The licentious life of the Magistrate,
 Mat. 16. 27 shall not quite the subiect if hee liue
 Rom. 2. 6 not vnder lawes: nor the wickednesse of
 Masters excuse the seruant, if hee bee
 vngodly, nor the ill conuersation of
 the Preacher bee a cause to saue the hearer if hee bee vngodly. For, that soule that sinneth, hee bee what hee may, shall
 g Eze. 11. 4 die g.

Who are
 to be fol-
 lowed.

The precept therefore which is giuen to an imitator of Orators I could wish were followed of a Christian imitator in oratory imitation, two sorts of examples there

to the followers of Christ,

there be: one alwaies, & most necessary h. Sturm.
to be followed h, the other but sometime in ca. i. lib.
and in some things. The example al. sui de imi-
waies necessary to bee followed of an O- tat, Orat-
rator is among the Grecians Demosthe- Oratione
nes, Cicero among the Latines: they who Imitation.
are but sometime, and in some things to Demost,
bee followed, are Poets, and Histori- Cicero.
graphers, So in Christian imitation. two Poets.
sorts of examples there be: one to be fol- Christian
lowed, and that both necessarily and al- imitation.
waies, which is our Saviour Christ; the Christ al-
other but sometime, and in some things, waies to be
as are good men and good women, whe- followed.
ther they be alive or dead. Good me

Strange perhaps it may seeme that the sometime
good but sometimes and in some things, & in some
should bee imitated. Yet it is not so things to
strange as true. For euery example of be follow-
theirs may not be followed. For the bet- ed, & why?
ter conceiuing whereof, it is to bee noted Foure
that foure sorts of examples, yea of the sorts of
elect and righteous, wee may read of examples
in the holy Scriptures. of good

1 The first wee may bee bold to imi- men men-
tate, as Abrahams faith: Iosephs cha- tioned in
storie k: Davids Zeale l: Tobias pite the holy
furnes towards the poore m: & such like Scripture.
wherewith the Bible is most singularly: Geo. 15. 5
replenished. l Plal. 119. 14. 20. 11. &c. Ro. 4. 9. 10.
m Tob. 1. 16. 17. 18. Tob. 2. 2. 4. k Geo. 29.

The Epistle

These are set before vs, that wee should
 • He. 6. 12. not bee slothfull, but followers of
 • Num. them, which through faith and pa-
 20. 12 tience inherite the promises.

Deu. 32. 51 3 Other examples there bee, which are
 p 2 Sa. 11 wicked, as the incredulitie of Moses and
 2. 3. 4. 5 Aaron, the adultery of David, Pe-
 9 Mat. 9 ters deniall, the ambition of the Apo-
 69. 70. &c. postles &c. which are placed before
 r Luk. 22 vs, but for diuerse ends. First to keep vs
 24. 25. &c. from that vaine opinion which in these
 dayes hath mightily crept into the minds
 of many, that the elect and regenerate
 sinne not. For that each of these, yea &
 all these too were elected, I thinke the
 most fantastickall will not denie, and yet
 that they sinned in most hainous manner
 is apparant.

(Phi. 2. 12. Secondly, to make vs the more wari-
 • Deut. 34. ly to looke vnto our footing. For if they
 1. 4. 5. so highly in Gods fauour, & so singularly
 • Num. adorned with his heavenly gifts, did fall
 10. 15. 25 and defile themselves so filthily with sin,
 Nu. 22. 38 with what great feare and trembling
 73. 82. 12 ought wee to make an end of our saluati-
 10. 11 on, who are nothing comparable in
 2 Sa. 16. 22 spirituall gifts vnto them? least as God
 Lu. 12. 16. either punished (as he did Moses, Aa-
 2 Ma. 10. 42 ron, and David, with temporall pu-
 Luk. 22. nishment) or reprobued (as Peter &
 25. 26. &c. the Apostles) them to their amende-
 ment

to the followers of Christ,

ment, so hee punish vs eternally to our
vtter confusion.

Thirdly, though we sinne, that we nei-
ther go on forwards, & proceede in wie-
kednesse, and despaire of Gods mercy, no
more then they did. For the Lord is a
rich ouer all that call vpon him, and
repent. Therefore ought no man to de-
spaire. For it is a true saying, and
by all means worthy to be receiued,
that Christ Iesus came into the
world to saue sinners. Whereby
many haue attained mercy: vnto the
ensample of them, which shall in
time to come beleue on him vnto
eternall life.

Last of all, they are set before
this end, that as God is mercifull, so
we bee. And as hee is ready to receiue
such into fauour as repent, so should
we be mercifull towards them, that in
his iudgement were once mercifull.
Whereby certain hereticks, as the
Catharans, or Novatians, were taught,
that none which had after they were
regenerate, could be assured, yet as
as Machiavel, and his fauourers, most con-
thinke that iniuries receiued, should ne-
uer be forgiven, are confuted.

3 Other things were wel done by good
men in time passed, which in those dayes

A 5

can-

The Epistle

cannot bee followed of vs without offence to God. As, they circumcised their male children the eight day, which is vnlawfull for vs to doe m, they offered sundry and many sacrifices, I meane bloody sacrifices vnto the Lord n, wee may not so doe o, one brother in those daies married the wife of another p, so to marry now were incest.

4 Finally, some deeds wee may read of, which were singular, such as nether wee may, nor others in those dayes might folow without the speciall and extraordinary motion of the holy Spirit. As was Abrahams readines to kill his owne son, and onely some Isaac q, as likewise was the feare which the Iewes made of the Egyptians by detaining their Iewels of silver, and Iewels of gold r. The dooing whereof was commendable in them, because they were commaunded s, but most damnable should it bee in others, for that there bee no commaundments to the contrary t, but none to doe so.

Whereby it is apparant, that good things are not in all things to bee imitated, as Saint Paule would bee so followed. as hee followed Christ u: so should they doe.

1 Cor. 2. 1.

There

1 Leu. 12. 3

m Act. 15. 3

Gala. 5. 1

n Le. 17. 3.

and. 22. 17

18. 19. &c.

o Col. 2. 20

Heb. 9. 1

and 10. 1. 2

p deu. 25. 6

Ruth. 4. 5

Mat. 22. 24

q Gen. 22.

1. 2. 3. &c.

r Ex. 12. 35

1 Ge. 22. 1.

Ex. 11. 1. 2.

t Deu. 17.

Ex. 20. 17.

Mat. 5. 21

Deu. 5. 19

Ex. 20. 13.

Ro. 13. 9

To the followers of Christ.

Therefore our Saviour is the example Christ al-
of vs to be followed, & that alwaies, & waic ne-
cessarily: alwaies, for that he was cessarie to-
most perfectly good x: and necessarily, be follow-
because both himselfe y, and his Apostles ed, & why?
z, haue commanded vs to doe so. x Elz. 53.9

But heere mistake me not, I beseech Ioh. 8.46
you. For albeit I say, our Saviour Christ 1 Pet. 3.12
is alwaies, yet do I not say in all things, y Mat. 11
and though necessarily to bee followed, 29
yet not as hee was God, for hee fasted Iob. 15.12
forty dayes, and forty nights a, hee re- 2 1 Co. 1.1
buked the waues of the sea, & the winds Eph. 5.1.2
and they ceased raging b, hee walked on a Phil. 2.5
the Sea, as on dry land c: with seauen Mat. 4.2
loaves and two little fishes, hee fedde. b Lu. 8.14
foure thousand men d, besides women & Mar. 4.39
children e, at onetime: at another, with c Mat. 14
five loaves and two fishes, hee fed about 25
five thousand men f, besides women and d Mar. 8.9
children g, he restored sight to the blind e Mat. 15
h, health to the sicke i, to the dead life k, 34
and many other miracles by the almightie f Ioh. 6.10
tie power of his God-head, hee wrought, g Mat. 14
which are unimitable (as I may say) of 19.21
mortall man, in so much as they offend b Ma. 9.27
greatly, whether they doe it of supersti- 28.29. &c.
tion, as the Papists do, or of mere Zeale i Mar. 5.13
as in former time did the God of 26. &c.
Matth. 4.23. 24. Matth. 9.35. k lo. 11.43.44.
Marke 5.35.41.42.

Norweigh

The first Epistle

One so Norweigh, who dare enterprise to imi-
called for tate our Saviour in any thing which hee
his fasting did miraculously as a **G O D** My reason
forty daies is; because there is neither commande-
which he ment that we should; nor example of any
did more Disciple or Apostle in holy Scripture;
then once: that would, or durst so doe. For we are
of whom not comanded to make a new world,
John Wie- to create things visible or invisible;
rus in a no nor in the world to doe miracles;
Treatise and to raise the dead, said Augustine
of his, De m, and so doe I.

ieiunij Cō- Our Saviour Christ therefore in those
mentij things which he did as God, must reli-
pa. 125. giously be worshipped, & followed zea-
m August. lously in what hee did as man. Hee that
de verbis loueth and hateth, what Christ as a God
Domini. doth loue and detest, imitates Christ as
Wherein much as man may imitate God n: he that
Christ is doth that which Christ did as a man; doth
to be imi- follow Christ as a Christian should.
tated.

a Theod. What that is, this Booke at large most
li. de acti; notably, and Bernard in few wordes
us virtute doth shewe, namely, o, To abhorre the
a Bernard. vanity of the world, and that coura-
li. sent. geously: For Iesus because he would
 not be elected a King, fled from the
 multitude: to repent, and that hear-
 tily: For Iesus was killed as a lambe:
 to haue true charity: for Iesus praied
 for his enemies.

1. And

to the followers of Christ.

1. And hereunto are we moued, as by Reasons
the commandement both of Christ him- why wee
selfe, and of his apostles Paul and Pe- should i-
ter, of which afore: 2. So partly because imitate or
we are called Christians. But Christians follow our
haue their Name of Christ: there- Sauiour
fore it is meete, that as they bee co- Christ.
heires of his name, so they should
be followers of his holinesse, so Ber-
nard p: and no man is rightly called p Bernard.
a Christian, who to the vetermost lib. Sent.
of his ability dooth not resemble
Christ in his conuersation, so Cypri- q Cyprian
an q: finally; Who doth not imitate de 12. abu-
Christ may well bee called a Christi- fanibus.
an, but he is none, so Augustin. r August.
what doth it profit thee to be called de vita
what thou art not, and to vsurpe a christiana.
strange name? If thou louest to bee
called a Christian, shew the frutes
of Christianitie, and then well
mayest thou take the name of Chri-
stian vnto thee, said the same Augu-
stine f. 3. Partly, for that hee is our In the
God. Therefore it is our parts to imi- fore said
tate him vvhom wee worship and serue. place.
4. Partly, because wee are by nature
giuen to imitation, vvhisedome vvhould
therefore vvhoe should imitate the best.
5. And partly, because we are English
men, who of all other people are most fa-
mous

The first Epistle, &c.

mous and infamous too for imitation, a shame were it therefore for vs to imitate so painefully as many doe, in eloquence Cicero, in philosophie Aristotle, in lawe Iustinian, in physick Galen, for worldly wisdom, yea to imitate as most doe, the French in vanitie, the Dutch in luxurie, in brauerie the Spanish, the Papists in idolatrie, in impiety and all impurity of life the Atheists, and not to follow our Sauour Christ in heauenly wisdom, and in all godlinesse of manners.

That we may so doe, hee from whom every good gift, and every perfect gift doth comēt, the Father of lights grant; who with the sonne and the Holy ghost be praised euermore, both in our hearts, mouthes and conversation, that others seeing our good workes, may glorifie our Father which is in heauen u, Amen.

1 Pct. 2. 12 Farewell in him whō we are to follow,
the 30. of Iuly,

Anno, 1580.

Tho. Rogers

A second Epistle concerning the translation and correction of this Booke.

Sebastian Castellio hauing translated this Booke into Latine, thought it good by way of Preface, to giue some reasons both why he had translated the same beeing in Latine already, and why so hee had translated it, leauing somewhat of the Author out.

The case standeth with mee as it did with Castellio. Therefore am I to yeeld some reasons, both why I haue translated this Booke into English, being in English already, and why so I haue translated it, leauing somewhat out as I haue done.

For the first I say, that neither is my dooing for noueltie strange, nor am I (as I trust) to bee reprooued therefore. For both I haue examples of good men in all Sciences and professions, who to their great commendations haue done the like: as may witnesse the sundry and diuerse

Another Epistle

uers interpretations of the works of *Aristotle* and *Plato* for Philosophy, of *Demosthenes* and *Isocrates* for Oratory, of *Galen* and *Hippocrates* for Physick, for Diuinitie of the sacred Bible : & also I haue taken the translation thereof vpon mee, not so much to translate, as to illustrate the same with places of Scripture. For doubtlesse great pitty was it, that a booke so plentifully, or altogether rather, fraughted with sentences of the scripture, was either no whit, as in some, or no better, as in the best impressions, quoted.

Besides, I haue not onely shewed the Chapters, but the very sentence also of euery Chapter, where what is written may bee found : A thing which, that I heare of, none afore mee hath doone. The bringing of which to passe, how painefull it hath beene to mee, hee alone can best report, who either hath doone, or dooth goe about the like : how not comfortable onelic, but profitable besides it will be to others, they shall finde that zealously doe reade the same.

And this whatsoever I haue done, was taken in hand at the motion of
the

of the Translator.

the Printer hercof, whose zeale to set forth good bookes for the advancement of vertue, and care to publish them as they ought to bee, would some Printers follow, neither would the sale of good workes bee mard many times for lacke of well handhing, nor vaine and vile bookes to the dishonour of God, the infamie of this Land, the confirming of the wicked in naughtinesse, and alienating of the well disposed from vertue, I say, to the discredit of the Gospell, and abuse of Printing, would not darlie bee so broacht as they are.

In which my translation, I haue rather followed the sense of the Author then his very words, in some places: the which also I haue studied, as nigh as I could, to expresse by the phrased of the holy Scripture, supposing it to bee a commendation, as to Ciceronians to vse the phrased of Cicero; so to Christians, most familiarly, to haue the words of the holy Scripture in their mouthes and bookes.

Now touching my correction, I trust no good man will mistake the same. For I haue left out nothing but

Another Epistle

but that might bee offensive to the
godlie .Yea, it is neither for quan-
titie much, nor for number aboue
foure sentences. The first whereof

a In the 2. is this *a*, *Hoc signum crucis erit in cælo,*
book, cha. *cum Dominus ad iudicandum venerit.*
12. in the According to *Castellio's* translation :
beginning *Atque hoc erit signum crucis in cælo,*
almost. *cum Dominus ad iudicandum veniet.* In

the English copie, set forth by *Ed-
ward Hakes thus*, And this signe of the
Crosse shall be in heauen, when the Lord
shall come to iudge the world. Which
sentence, forasmuch as I see neither
the Scripture, nor any good Writer
doeth confirme the same, I haue left
out altogether.

b In the
foresaid
chapter.

The second is this *b*, *Sed nec ini-
micum Diabolum timebis, si fueris fide
armatus, & Iesu cruce signatus:* Accord-
ing to *Castellio*, *Quin ne Diaboli
quidem inimicitias timebis, si fide ar-
matus, & Iesu cruce signatus eris.* In
the English translation, *Nay thou
shalt not feare the enmitie of the de-
will neither, if thou be armed with faith,
and marked with the Crosse of Iesus.*
What neede thele words, . And
marked with the Crosse of Iesus? I
haue therefore not mentioned
them.

The

of the Translator.

The third is c, *Non enim stat meritum nostrum, & perfectus status nostri* c In the same
in multis suauitatibus & consolationibus &c. According to Castellio, Ne- chapter.
que enim in copia voluptatū & consolationum situm est meritum nostrum, officijque perfectus, &c. In the English translation, Neither is our merit, and the coming forward in our dutie consisting in plenty of pleasures and comforts, &c. Which I haue thus Englished, Neither dooth our coming forward consist in the store of pleasures, and comfort, &c. Leauing out the Worde merite: Because both the SCRIPTVRE is cleane against our meriting, and the Authour too, d As most in many places condemnes the principally same. in the third

The fourth e, *Sed neque qui tunc iustierant, & saluandi ante passionem tuam & sacra mortis debitum, cæleste regnum poterant intrare.* According to Castellio: Quinetiam qui tunc iusti e In the 3. seruandique erant, y ante supplicium tu- book cha. um sacraque mortis meritum in cæleste 20. in the regnum intrare non poterant. In Hakes middle translation, Nay also euen those vbo thereof. then were iustified, and in the state of saluation, could not enter the kingdome beauen before thy passion, and the merits

Another Epistle.

f Catech. merites of thy precious death. Where
Trident. then are they? In hell? I thinke
 upon these none will say it. In Abrahams bo-
 words of some, as some f. In Limbo patrum, as
 the Creed, other Papists g. do say: but that will
Descendit not easily be proued. Wherefore, as
ad inferos. that which otherwise might offende
Bern. in the godly, I haue cleane omitted and
 left out the sentence.

fest. omniū And as I haue once past without
Sanct. mentioning, these, which saue of
Serm 41 superstition: So haue I added some
g D. Iohn. godly sentences, which haue beene
in 4 distn. omitted both by *Castellio*, and such
45. qu ar 3. as followed him, as may appeare,
Iauellus both in the 47. according to *Castellio*,
philoso. as in mine, the 48. Chapter, within
Christ p 8 three sentences of the beginning:
Tract 4 c. and also in the 63. as in mine the 64.
de locis in- Chapter, somewhat after the middle
felictum thereof.

damnat. So that I maruell, both why these
 were omitted, and the rest not a-
 mended by such as haue taken the
 Translation of this Booke vpon
 them. I grant they haue done the
 dutie of Translators, yet sure I am
 they haue neglected a greater dutie
 then of Translatorshippe. For my
 parr, I had rather come into the
 displeasure of man, than displease
 God;

of the Translator.

God; and rather moue the obstinate heretick, then offend the weake and simple Christian.

It may be obiected, that I might haue giuen some note by the way, and so let them passe, as doth Erasmus in his Translation. Surely, Erasmus might better doe so in Latine then I may in English; Forasmuch as most are learned, and haue iudgement which read his, and I doe that which I doe for the simpler sort. And were other books that I could name, excellent for many good poynts, yet for some things superstitious, purged and corrected; Iure I am, both God would greatly like thereof, and many would then reade them, who now reiect them, & much profit would be reaped, whereas now there is either little or no profit at all taken.

One Chapter you shall find in this my Translation more than is in other Bookes. Yet haue I added no Chapter but diuided the 6. Chapter of the third booke; Forasmuch as it comprehendeth partly a thanksgiving to God for his benefits, and partly a commendation of Charity, which aptly me thinks makes two chapters.

Now

Another Epistle.

Now hee, who principally both
stirred the Authour to make this
Booke, and me to doe what I have
done, euen God almighty, graunt,
that both you and I, and euery of vs,
may vse it to the comfort
of our soules,

Amen.

Yours in Christ,

20 MA 59

Tho. Rogers.



A godly Preface, made by
him, whoſoeuer hee was,
that tranſlated this Book
out of the Latine tongue
into French.

IF this Booke, which concerneth
the following of Chriſtes example,
haue heereſore yeelded ſome fruite
to ſuch as haue giuen themſeues to the
reading thereof, I thinke it will yeelde
no leſſe heereafter, eſpecially now that
it is ridde and cleaned from a number
of imperfections that were in it before.

And although it bee apparant, that the
conuerſation of ſuch as call themſelues
Chriſtians, is wonderfully corrupted:
yet notwithstanding, becauſe God is ſo
good, that hee will euermore drawe ſome
one or other of an infinite number from
it, it maketh mee that I am not altogether
out of hope.

Againe like as in greit and fore diſeaſes
all the beſt remedies that can bee deu-
uiſed, are wont to bee applied with all
ſpeed: euen ſo the more wee ſee wicked-
nes and vngodlines to abound, the more
ought wee to conſider by what meanes
they may bee remedied, that ſome may be
ſaued among ſo many thouſands, which
are hard hearted, and enemies to all good
warnings.

It muſt needs be granted, & experience
prooueth it ſufficiently: that there was
 neuer any age, wherein Chriſtians haue
begun

A godly Preface.

beene more out of order, nor haue had
lesse regarde of godlinesse than they haue
at this day: yet notwithstanding, this
ought not to barre from hoping that God
will drawe some continually to himselfe.
On the other side, like as among a great
sort which are stricken with exorisme sick-
nes and diseases, some doe alwaies scape as
it pleaseth God: so it is to be hoped, that
among an infinite number of false Christi-
ans, God will touch some to bring them
backe from the filthinesse and corruption
of the world, & to lead them to the fearing
of himselfe.

Moreouer, it is not to be doubted, but
that God hath alwaies some seruants of
his, as it were couered vnder the great
number, which by the power of his holy
Spirit doe liue continually in all purenesse
and vndefilednesse, without cleaung or
conuening to the vngodlinesse, and disor-
derednes of the wicked.

And thus is it which confirmeth mee in
my hope that this little booke shall not
be vnprofitable nor hurtlesse.

Nevertheless, this booke is not full
of any thing, nor beautified with flow-
ers of humane wisdom, neither dooth it
discourse or treat of high or dark things,
neither is it stuffed with subtile questi-
ons and arguments, nor indited with elo-
quent stile, as those commonly bee which
are propounded and set out to the world,
rather for boasting and vaine glory like
then for any desire to doe other men
good. This booke is plaine and without
any great gaines, but yet so full of good

and
may

A godly Preface.

& wholesome instruction, that I dare well *Profit of*
know, that whosoever readeth it with a *this Book*
right disposed mind, without respect to
any other thing then God, and the saluati-
on of his owne soule, which is the onely
marke that wee must leuell at, hee shall
reap singular profit thereby.

As for my part I can witnes of my selfe
that God hath oftentimes made it to serue
me for a spurte to quicken and waken mee
vp from my slothfulnes and dulnesse, and to
kindle in me a desirousnesse of his seruice,
and I hope that the like shall befall to all
such as shoot at none other marke but to
knowe, feare, and loue him, with a pure
right meaning, and single minde, and to
lead a holy conuersation before him.

And in good sooth it may well be saide, *Good Books*
that vnto true Christians, good and holy *as ladders*
bookes are as ladders to climbe vp to hea- *to climbe*
uen, as sparkes to kindle the heate of the *vp to Hea-*
spirit, when it is quenched or waxed colde *uen,*
in them, and as props to stay vp their faith
that it may increase.

I speake of true Christians. For as for
them that are Christians but in word, and
ceremonies, some of them be so beset of
all sorte feeling of Gods, and of their owne
conscience, that they neuer enter into the
considering of the thing that might bee a-
uaileable and necessary to the well instruc-
ting of them in the truth, and to the tray-
ning of them to some godly behaviour but
are wholly giuen to the things of this life,
as though there were none other after it.
And other some haue their mindes so tied
to the letter, that they can make none ac-
count of any other Bookes, but such as
may make them skillfull, eloquent, sharp
wittes,

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witted, and subtle, and consequently wonderfull among men, despising all such works as may make them better, by moving them to the exercises of their profession. And of this sort the number is very great now adayes; of whom nothing can bee said, saving that (as the Apostle speaketh of them) they can well enough say with their mouth that they know God, but in their deeds and workes they renounce

a Tit. 1. 16 him.

And truly wee bee come to a time, wherein wee bee more given, and more hasty to reason and dispute of our religion, then to be religious indeed; more given to make great and large discourses of it, then to put it in practise, and to shew the truth and purenesse of it, by our holy conuersation; and at a word more given to talke then to doe: in somuch that we may well perceive, that the Chaitian profession is nothing else now adayes, but a lip wisdom, and a skill, to hold talke among such as make their vaunts of it.

But what? doe I learne it lippe-wisdom? Nay, would God it were not rather turned into a fleshly and licentious loosenes, as wee may partly see already by too many effects thereof.

But so doth it alwayes befall to such as having received Christs doctrine, apply not themselves forthwith to the forsaking of themselves, without the which it is not possible for vs to bee Christs true Disciples. For as the light cannot match with darkness: so cannot Christs spirit match with sinne, and the lusts of the flesh, in somuch that if the practise thereof bee omitted, there is none other thing to be looked

b Mat. 16

14.

c 2 co. 6. 14

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looked for but a kinde of liberty, whereby men shaking off all yokes, shall giue themselves ouer to all euill, & looth themselves in their finnes; not that they keepe not still some outward shewe and countenance of godlines: for vlesse it bee some Epicures, and godlesse men, they neuer proccede so farre as to doe away, and to giue ouer all seruice of God.

But yet are all such shewes and outward countenances in vaine & of none account before him which requireth mens hearts *d, d Dent. 6. 5.* and contenteth not himselfe with the only outward deedes *e, e Job 4. 22*, wherewith notwithstanding they thinke to quiet their owne consciences, and to auoide the feeling of Gods wrath for their finnes; which thing may well serue for a time in the behalfe of the ignorant, and of such as haue no better skill: but as for those which know where- in the seruice of God consisteth, they cannot but bee meruailously abashed, if they fall to examining of their own wicked conuersion.

For there is no kind of ceremony (how faire a shew soeuer it beare, no not euen though it be of the number of those which God hath enioyned for the keeping of order in his Church) that can satisfie the conscience which is troubled with the feeling of it owne sinne, and make it sure before the iudgement of God: who will not iudge vs according to ceremonies, but according to our workes *f, f 2 co. 5. 10.*

We reade what Iesus Christ will say to such as shall haue cast out diuells in his Name *g, g Ma. 7. 23*, prophesied in his Name, and wrought many other great things in his Name. Away from me (will he say to them)

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ye workers of wickednesse. How much more then will he say so, to such as occupying themselves alone in some ceremonies, & not in the true godlinesse, which the Apostle saith is profitable to all things
b 1 Tim. 4. 8 *h*, shall have given themselves to followe their flesh and the world :

To be short, we must come to this point, that for as much as Christianity is not an outward profession, nor a thing that consisteth in outward ceremonies (so as it may suffice to busie our selues about it) or in words (as who should say it were enough to haue the skill to take and discourse of it as men doe of their worldly sciences) but it is the very power and might of God, whereby God intendeth to renew, and as it were to create againe his owne image and likenesse in man, who is fallen from it by his owne fault, and to set it againe in the former brightnesse & perfection, that hee may attaine againe to the blessed immortality: it is not to be doubted, but that the same is the thing whereon we ought to fixe & settle the eyes of our minds, and whereunto we ought to apply all our wits, straining them earnestly and to the vtermost of their powers to attaine thereunto. Otherwise we shall but lose our labour, in seeking after this or that, & all that euer we can doe shall serue to no purpose but onely to train vs the further from the mark that is set before vs.

I know well it will be replied hereunto, that the thing which I speake of cannot be obtained in this life, wherein we be subiect to so many infirmities *h*, and are so corrupted and fraile, that it is vnpossible to attaine thereto.

Neither

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Neither doe I say, that we can attaine so farre, as to be set perfectly againe in our former vncorruptness; so long as wee be held wrapped in this mortall body. That is reserved for the world to come wherein all things shall bee reduced to the highest perfection. But my meaning is onely to declare that the thing which shall bee accomplished there, must be begunne in such wise here, as wee may not cease to drawe neerer and neerer vnto it, by shortening our way continually. *l Wis. 9.15*
m Ro. 21.1
n Phi. 3.12

And surely, the Scripture teacheth vs manifestly, that none shall become partakers of the glorious rising againe, wherein consisteth the full measure of our felicity, but those who haue endeouored heere to die vnto sin, and to liue againe in newness of life, which is called the right resurrection, euen by the spirit of Christ, whom all true Christians haue clothed themselves withall, which haue mortified the deeds of the flesh, which haue put off the olde man, with all his workes, and put on the new man, according to the image of him that created vs, and which haue cleansed themselves here from all vncleannes both of body and soule. *o Ro. 6.4.5*
p Gal. 5.19
Rom. 8.4.5
q Eph. 4.22

And that is the reason why S. Paul, hauing said that when Christ appeareth, wee also shall appeare with him in glory, doth forthwith warne vs to mortifie our members that are vpon the earth, whereby hee doth vs well to vnderstand, that this mortification must goe afore in vs here, if we purpose to attaine to glory. *r Col. 3.1*

The same Paul telleth vs, that our bodies shall be quickned by reason of Christs spirit, which shall haue dwelled in vs here. *r Ro. 8.11*
and

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and whereby wee shall haue repressed all outward affections.

1 Ioh. 3. 3

Also S. Iohn protesteth, that whosoever putteth his trust in Christ, doth purge himselfe after the example of Christ.

1 cor. 6. 9

To be short, there be infinite texts touching this point in the holy Scriptures. And though there were no more but this one, which they vtter so often, namely, that the vnrighteous shall not inherite the kingdome of God, it might be enough to content vs withall, and to put vs in feare, and to moue vs to true and earnest repentance.

But alas, we be so loth to yeeld to this point, and our flesh breedeth vs so many hinderances, that wee doe what we can to eschew that burthen, and to shake it from our shoulders. But in so dooing what doe we else, but strue against our owne soules health, & resist Gods grace, who commeth to saue vs? howbeit by such meanes as he himselfe hath ordained, and by such waies as hee commandeth vs, and not by meanes or waies of our owne chusing.

Well said. God hath commanded vs to beleue in his Sonne, and for our beleeuing on him, hee promiseth vs euerlasting life: so as all they which beleue in Christ, taking him for their Sauour, and applying to themselves all the benefits which hee hath purchased for vs by his death, are in the right way.

1 Rom 8. 1

But who be these beleeuers? Euen they (saith the Apostle) which walke not after the flesh, but after the spirit, they which take paine to frame themselves to the will of Christ, into whose bodie they be grafted, & vnto whom they be knit together,

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as his liuely members ⁷ : they which inde- ⁷ Eph. 3. 17
uour to loue God, and to giue ouer the loue ² Lak. 9. 13
of themfelues ², and of the World ^a, they ^a 1^o. 2. 15
which haue their whole conuerſation in ^b Phi. 3. 20
heauen ^b, they which loath their former
life, & forſeare of falling thereinto againe,
do the more watch and looke the warlier
to their thoughts, deuises, words & deeds,
they which feeling their owne weakneſſe,
and infirmity, make inceſſant prayer vnto
God for the ſpirit of ſtrength and ſtedfaſt-
neſſe ^c, and which feeling their coldneſſe and ^c 1^o. Theſ. 5.
vnluſtineſſe, doe craue the ſpirit of ſeruency ¹⁷.
and earneſtneſſe, they which in aduerſity do
keepe themſelues from murmuring, and
endeuour to bee patient ^d : they which be- ^d Ro 5. 3. 4
thinke themſelues of Gods benefiſſe, and
yeeld him thanks for them ^e, they that ^e Pſal. 116
ſtraine themſelues to ſuccour their neigh- ¹²
bours both in body and ſoule ^f, and at a ^f Ro. 12. 4
word, they which crucifie the fleſh, with
the affections and luſts thereof ^g. ^g Col. 3. 5.

In ſomuch that they in whom theſe fruits
are not found, ne make not the talent o^f
faith to preuaile in ſuch manner as I haue
told you, cannot bee ſaid to be in the num-
ber of the true beleuers and faithfull ones,
notwithſtanding that they pretende ſome
countenance of honeſty : and therefore
much leſſe can thoſe bee ſaid to bee of that ^h Gal. 5. 19
number in whom the works of the fleſh ^h
are apparant.

But ſome fleſhly Chriſtian will ſay ſtill, ^{Imputation}
that as for him, hee is cloathed with the ^{of righte-}
righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, that the perfect ^{ouſneſſe.}
obedience which Chriſt hath yeelded to
G O D his Father in ſatisfying the law, is
imputed vnto him, as if hee himſelfe had
yeelded it : and to bee ſhort, that hee is

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reconed for righteous by his faith, so as none of al his imperfections are to be made account of.

If thou listest to beguile thy selfe, thou maiest: but it will be to thy harme and confusion. Indeede Christ laieth not our sins to our charge, if we beleue aright in him: neither shall our imperfections hinder the vertue and efficacie of his death. But to beare thy selfe in hand, that Christ holdeth thee for righteous, when thou gineest thy selfe to vnrighteousnes, and hast none other care but to follow thine owne inordinate lusts: it is not onely a doeing of great dishonour vnto him, but also a scorning of him for his redeeming thee.

And I pray thee, what man of good and sound iudgement dareth say, that Christ houldeeth him for lowly, which is puffed vp with pride? Or for liberall and charitable, which is full of niggardlines, distrust and vunkindnes? or for a louer of God, which is full of selfe loue, and loue of the world? or for a worshipper of God, which maketh no right account of him? Or for a deligh-ter in God, which hath none other care but to satisfie his owne pleasures and delights? Or for a man mindfull of Gods benefits, which is vnthankfull? Or (to speak more homelic) a whoremonger, for a chaste person; or a glutton, and a drunkarde for a sober and moderate feeder? I beleue that euen thou thy selfe (if thou consider it thoroughly) wouldest bee ashamed to thinke it, and much more to speake it. For how is it possible, that a man should be righteous without righteousness, good without goodnesse, vertuous without vertue?

Saint Iohn saith manifestlie, that at
Christ

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Christ is righteous: so hee that worketh
righteousnesse is righteous, and that hee
which sinneth is of the diuell: yea and hee
saith moreouer, that the thing wherein the
Children of God doe shew themselves to
differ from the children of the diuel, is, that
the one sort worke righteousness, and the
other sort worke sinne.

And of a truth I cannot tell how Gods
true children, who are all true Christians,
could otherwise bee better marked out,
than by their applying of themselves night
and day, to doe whatsoever is pleasant
and acceptable to their heavenly Father:
whom because they knowe to bee righte-
ous, they also doe wholly endeavour them-
selves to do righteous things, wherein they
shew themselves to be borne of him, as S.
Iohn sheweth yet further. If yee knowe
(saith he) that God is righteous, know ye
also, that whosoever worketh righteous-
nesse, is borne of him k. *Ioh. 3. 7*
k. I. Io. 2.

Moreouer, how can it come to passe,
that the true Christians should not giue
themselves to righteousness, seeing they
haue Christs spirit, (for hee that hath not
Christs spirit saith the Apostle is no Chri-
stian) which being holy of himselfe, can-
not but drue forward the party vnto all
holiness whom hee possesseth: It cannot
be but that he must needs bring forth his
fruits, which are Louingnes, gladnes, qui-
etnes, mercifulnes, meekenes, faithfulness,
mildnes, and staiednes To be short, it can-
not bee but that hee must needs alter the
whole man both within and without, to
make a new creature of him. *29*
G. 1. 5. 22

But see to what point Satan & our owne
nature bring vs; namely, to full asleepe, and

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to sooth our selues in our vices, and to
make vs to let the bridle lie loose on our
necks, & all vnder colour that Christ im-
m 2. Cor. 5 puteth not our sins vnto vs *m*: nay, he im-
19 puteth them vnto vs, if we continue in
m Tit. 2. 11 them. For he died not to leaue vs in them
still, but to take vs out of them really and
in very deed, as witnesseth further Saint
e Rom 6. 5 Iohn, who telleth vs plainly *p*, that Christ
p-1 Ioh. 5. 5 appeared to take away our sins.

In which place hee intends not to speak
(as I take it) of the forgiveness of our sins
past, but to say that Christ doth really, &
in very deed, take away their sinning in
workes, which doe beleue on him; which
cannot be done, but that he must also there-
with put into them, and imprint in them,
the loue of righteousness.

Neuerthelesse, I will not straine my selfe
any further about this matter, which
would require a whole booke rather then
a Preface. And in good sooth, I had not
spoken so largely thereof, but that I hoped
to doe some men good thereby, who vnder
patience that they deserue not ought at
Gods hand, doe make so small account of
the good works which God requireth at
our hands, that they giue ouer the exercise
of all goodnes, and doe weed out of their
hearts all regard of godly life, & of seeking
q Phi. 2. 22 their soules health with fear & trembling *q*,
Rom I. 12 as they shew well enough by the sequel.

Furthermore, I thought by that meanes
to draw on the Reader to the receiuing
of this little Treatise the more willingly:
wherein, as there is not any thing contay-
ned, but such as may serue to teach vs to
order our life well; so was it also requisite
to shew, that there is no point of christia-
nity.

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nitie in vs, vnlesse wee set our whole heart thereupon. And on the other part, forasmuch as the ground hereof is how we may follow the example of Christ, it were very convenient to warne christian folke to inforce themselves therto without flattering themselves, and without feeding themselves with vain opinions, that might turn them from the right way or hinder them in it. For seeing that Christs life was not set forth vnto vs, alonely to make a legend of it, or to make a wondring at it in words, but to bee followed by vs: it is the mark whereunto we must tend, in drawing to perfection so neere as is possible, and as much as our frailty can afford. And otherwise, seeing wee be tolled thereunto by Iesus Christ himselfe, not onely in words, but also by examples, which are as liuely portraictures of the life which wee ought to leade here, in waiting for his glorious comming againe, wee cannot exempt our selues from it without prejudice of our saluation, no nor yet without cewraying that we haue no list to it. For were wee rightly desirous to become happy, & to attaine to the endlesse life which is promised vs in Christ, wee could not shew it better then in taking the way therto, wherby we both may and must attaine vnto it.

And that way is none other, than to beleue in Christ, and to walke as he walked. And that is S. Iohns meaning where hee saith, that he which saith he dwelleth in Christ, ought to walke as hee walked, that is to say, hee ought to endeuous to liue as hee liued. There are alwaies enow which boast themselves to beleue in Christ, or to be Christians. But the very meane to know them,

*Boasting
Christians.*

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them, is to marke whether their whole endeavour be to follow Christ or no, which is as the badge of this so excellent profession, or as it were the faire coloured livery, whereby wee shew and declare our selues to be the same indeed, which wee report our selue to be.

And certes it is not possible that they which are vnited and knit vnto Christ, as his members, should not bee touched with a desire to resemble him, and to follow his steps. For the very thing wherein the vni-on & coniunction are shewed, is that the members doe shewe themselves to be of the selfe same that the head is. And where that is not doone, it is an euident prooue that the member is rotten, senselesse, and void of the life which is in the head.

And in this behalfe, I report mee vnto the iudgement of man, who is wise enough of himselfe to attaine easily to that reason.

Not without cause therefore doth Saint Paul say, that wee must bee of the same minde which Iesus Christ was of. For thereby his meaning is to do vs to vnderstand, that wee which are members of Christ must be answerable to him in vni-ty of affection and will. Which thing he teacheth yet more plainly in another place, where he saith, that wee be grafted into Christ, after the likenesse of his death and resurrection: meaning thereby, that wee which are ioyned vnto Christ as an im-
[Phi. 2. 5] pe is to the stock of a tree, ought so to liue of his life as there may not appeare any deformitie in vs; but that as he hath died, so we must die also: and as hee is risen againe, so we must rise againe likewise, we must die (I say) vnto sinne, and rise againe
[Rom. 6. 5] vnto

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vnto newnesse of life; for that is the death
and the life which he speaketh of:

Which thing I haue said, to the end that
wee which boast our selues to be Christs
members, should vaderstand that our van-
ting of that title is vaine, if we labour not
to resemble him in all our whole life. And
in what things: not in raising the dead *u Joh. 11. 43*
in giuing sight to the blinde *x Ma 9. 28*
the sick *y Mar. 2. 3*, or in fasting forty daies *z (for*
these are miracles which hee wrought *Luk. 5. 18*
both by himselte, and by his Apostles, for
the confirming of his doctrine amongst *z Lu. 4. 2. 3*
men, that they might receiue it as hea-
uenly and conming from God: and hee
wrought them once for all without any
need of hauing them done againe by vs)
but in following his vertues, as his faith,
his obedience, his patience, his constan-
cie, his temperance, his lowlinesse, his
meekenesse, mildnesse, gentlenesse, perseue-
rance, diligence, earnestnesse in praying
and thanksgiuing, & many other things.

All the which he did, not to make a shew
of them to vs, but to traine vs to the same
by his owne example; not to impute them
after such a sort vnto vs, that we should be
held for such as he himselte is, without be-
ing so indeed: but, to the intent that as he
dtd them so we should do them too, as he
himselfe saith *a*; & as Peter saith *b*, to the
end we should follow his footsteps. *a Mat. 11
28*

And how shall we know that we be in
him, and are made partakers of his graces,
but by our endeauouring of our selues to
keepe his commandements? And soorthly
the onely meanes to know and to be assu-
red in our selues that we dwell in Christ &
Christ in vs, is our keeping of his com-
man.

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e. 1 Ioh. 2.

3. 4.

d. 1 Ioh. 1.

3. 15. 16.

mandements, as S. Iohn teacheth *e.*, adding further, that our knowing that he dwelleth in vs, is by the spirit which hee hath giuen vs, because that by that spirit, we endeaunour to follow him, and to frame our selues to his will, whereby wee yeeld prooffe of the vnion that is betweene him and vs. For euen as the children of this world, doe witnes themselves to be all one with the world, by following their worldly lusts *d.*, ambition, couetousnesse, & pleasures, which thing I say also of the members of Satan: so inlike case, the Christians shewe themselves to bee made one with Christ by his holy Spirit, when they follow Christ step by step, and make his life to serue them, as a most perfect rule to leade their life by.

What remaineth then to be done in this case? Soothly, that we on our part do inforce our selues, by eschewing all fleshliness; which being hurtfull, & noysome in all things, is most hurtfull and noysome in this behalfe: for so much as it is of such importance, that wee cannot neglect it without wilfull disappointing our selues of our saluation and loueraigne felicitie.

e. Ma. 7. 14

f. Lu. 9. 13

This way is narrow and rough; I confesse it so, as all Christians do, and so doth Christ himselfe say it also *e.* For inasmuch as thereby wee must forsake our selues to follow Christ *f.* (which is very painfull and hard to flesh & blood, which desireth nothing but her owne pleasures and commodities) no doubt but we feele it to be very bitter & burdensome. But what for that? Yet must wee take that way, without stepping aside one way or other. For that is the onely way, which after many labors, & hard

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hard pinches leadeth in the end vnto life,
As for the other way, it is very broad,
faire, and accompanied with great pleasures,
but the end thereof, saith he, leadeth
vnto death. Now it is much better to goe
by labour to rest, by tribulation to ioy, and
by death vnto life, then contrariwise to go
by rest to labour, by ioy to tribulation, &
by life to death: for look what thing com-
meth last shall be euermore lasting.

What thing then should hold vs backe
or hinder vs in this race? If it be the world,
with all the goods, honours, and pleasures
thereof: let vs vnderstand that all those
things passe away *b*, like an arrow which is *b* *1 co. 7. 13*
shot at a white, the trace whereof is not *1 Ioh. 2. 17*
perceiued any more when it is once past.
If it be the roughnes and vneasines of the
waie: let vs consider how there is nothing
so vneasie, nor so rough, which becom-
meth not easie & smooth by continuall vse.

If it bee the infirmity and weakenesse of
our nature, let vs thinke vpon him which
hath promised to stand by vs, to helpe vs
and to strengthen vs; who being good, will
help vs, and being Almighty, will also
strengthen vs, conditionally that wee pray
to him continually. Aske (saith hee) & it
shall be giuen vnto you, seeke and ye shall
finde, knocke at the doore, & it shall be o-
pened vnto you. Provided alway, that wee
on our side doe straine our selues *k*, for hee *k* *Mat. 11.*
helpeth not them that are idle and do nothing. *12.*
Hee giueth his Spirit: but it is to
such as feeling their owne feeblenes, and
being displeased with it do earnestly de-
sire and craue his Spirit. To such as no-
thing aske, nothing he doth giue. It is euen *l* *Lu. 11. 13*
hee that worketh in vs; Howbeit, not so
long

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long as wee our selues sleep, nor so long as wee could our armes act offe, and much lesse so long as wee resist him.

m Mat. 11.
22
The kingdome of G O D (saith Iesus Christ) suffereth violence *m*, and the violent pluck it to them. And who bee those violent? those which being inflamed with great desyre and zeale to fashion themselves like to their head, do offer violence and force to themselves, to the intent that their nature and flesh being restrained and bridled, may not cast any impediment in the way of Gods spirit, which worketh in them, which feeling themselves colde and lazie, whether it be in praying to God; or in giuing him thanks for all things, or in any work of godlines either towards God or towards their neighbours, doe quicken and stir vp themselves, without suffering themselves to goe on, and to bee overcome of their flesh, which take paines to marke all their owne thoughts and affections, & so restrain them from passing their bounds and from rousing astray, setting a sure watch vpon their mind, and following the counsell of the wise, because that from the mind commeth the wel spring of all euill *m*: which, knowing how easie it is for them to slippe aside at euery least occasion in the world, do set good guard vpon themselves continually, labouring to subdue & overcome themselves: and finally which by Christs spirit doe incessantly crucifie the flesh with the lusts whereof.

m Mat. 15
18
And of a truth, wee bee of our owne nature so contrary to God, and so bent, the seeking of our owne selues, and our affections are so heady and vehement, and wee be halued vnto euill with so great force
by

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by our flesh, that we must not thinke that God can haue his dominion in vs, vnlesse wee vse great force to ouercome and subdue our selues to him.

Yet notwithstanding, there are some now adayes, yea, and a great summe, who without taking much paine (I will not say without taking any at all) cease not for all that to bragge afterward that they bee of Gods kingdome, but they deceiue themselves. For seeing that Gods kingdome is righteousness, peace and ioy through the holy Ghost, as saith saint Paule *o*, how *o* Ro. 14.17 can it haue place in them, which suffer vnrighteousnes to raigne in them? And verily it is a suffering it to raigne, when they repress it not, according also as they shew in effect by their conuersation, which is no better then the conuersation of those whom they condemne.

I know well they haue their shifts for it, saying that wee haue no power at all, that wee shall bee flesh still as long as we bee in this life, & that we cannot proceed far forward in this great frailty and weaknes of our nature, but that Christ will supplie all our wants, and not lay out sinnes to our charge, Yea verely, but when they say so or rather flatter themselves after that manner, perceine they not how they degrade themselves from the degree of christians? For if they cannot obey God, and doe the thing that hee commandeth, they haue not Christs Spirit *p*; and if they haue not Christs Spirit, then are they not Christi- *p* Rom. 8.9. ans. S. Paule saith well, that the flesh neither will nor can obey Gods lawe: but yet hee addeth therewith, that Christians are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. You
bee

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be not in the flesh, saith hee, but in the Spirit; at least wise, if Gods spirit bee in you. Whereupon it must needs follow, that they which cannot obey God are in the flesh, and those, saith hee cannot please God.

*Who are
fleshly.*

Which reason may serue also to this saying of theirs, that we shall alwaies be flesh. For if we alwaies be flesh, wee shall alwaies bee still vnchristian-like: because that to be flesh, and to bee Christians, are things that can by no meanes match together; I mean to be flesh in such wise, as to make none other trade then to follow a mans own lusts. For otherwise I deny not but that the flesh is still in vs so long as wee bee wrapped in this mortall body, to prouoke vs vnto euill, and to make war against the spirit; but not to follow the froward motions of it any more. For this standeth true, that whosoever followeth them, is not to bee registered in the number of Christians. And therefore S. Paul threatneth euerlasting death to such as liue after the flesh 9. specially after they haue bin taught that they be alwayes subiect vnto damnation.

9 Ro. 8. 13

As touching our frailty and weaknesse, wherewith they thinke to preuaile continually, against such as presse them with their duty: Surely I confesse with them that it is great, and such as maketh euen the holiest to bee overthrowen and vanquished oftentimes by the diuell and their owne flesh, which thing they lament and bewaile: but as for to make a shield or a defence of it, to sooth themselves in their vices, and to take licence to follow their lusts; it is for such folk to doe, as seeke all manner of occasion to do euill, & to rid away all regard of vpright dealing and righteousness,

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teousnes, which thing cannot agree with true Christians, whose whole study is to maintaine themselves in good workes, as they that know how ill it becometh those which professe themselves to bee made cleane by the blood of Iesus Christ, to *r He. 9. 14* turne backe to the defiling of themselves againe.

Moreouer, to say that Christ will supply all our wants, and not charge vs with our sinnes, whereunto wee haue yeelded our selues so freely and willingly, after wee haue knowne him, seemeth in my iudgement to rende to none other thing, than to make Christ a cloake for our vices, and to take occasion of his grace to flatter and maintaine our selues in them, which cannot bee done without manifest wickednesse.

For seeing that Christ maketh vs partakers of his grace, vpon condition that we shall leade a life both pure, holy, and be- seeming him, & to bring the same to passe doth promise vs his Spirit, so wee aske it of him in faith: if we doe the contrary, it will not bee without dooing him wrong. Wherethrough it will come to passe, that wee shall bereaue our selues of the benefit of our redemption, and make our selues vnworthy thereof. For (as S. Iohn teacheth vs) Christ his blood maketh none cleane, saue those which walke in the light as God is light. *f. 1 Ioh. 1. 7*

But I beseech these men in the name of God, to consider these things aduisedly, and to thinke earnestly vpon this saying of Christs, that, Not all they which say Lord Lord, shall be saued, but they which do the will of his heauenly Father. Neither *t Ma. 7. 31* words

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wordes nor ceremonies doe proue folke to be Christians, children of God, faithfull ones, members of Christ, and chosen of God (which are titles wherewith they deck themselves, as with things which belong peculially and alonely vnto them) but their deedes and their loue proceeding from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from an vnfaigned faith.

Let vs then conclude, that the only true marke of Christians and right beleeuers, is loue, without the which, a man may well talke of Christ, and of the Gospel, and he may wel haue the Sacraments, and all the godly ceremonies that can be deuised, and yet all shall be nothing *u.*

u 1 Cor. 13
1.2.3.

And would God that the Christians of our time, as well the one sort, as the other (for alas, they be diuided asunder) had put it well in vse, these former yeers. For then should wee not see now so much hatred, heart-burning, cruelty, meddling, sedition, part-taking, treason, treacherie, desire of reuenge, and other infinite mischiefes that raigne amongst vs. Neither should blood haue beene shed after such a sort, and in so great aboundance as it is; and yet still shall be, vnles God vsing his absolute power, restraîne mens minds, which are now fiercely bent, and felled one against another, so as they may not be able to bring their desires and passions to passe: & that they also on their side doe suffer themselves to bee bowed by acknowledging their faults, and by hauing recourse to the remedy of repentance which is the onely meane to appease Gods wrath so kindled against vs: and at a word doe turne their rage and cruelty into mildnes and charity.

And

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And to lay foorth the matter yet more particularly, the Christians are those which crucifie the flesh, with the lusts and affections thereof. The children of God, are they that are led by Gods spirit, and not by the diuells spirit, nor by their own affections. The faithful are they, which not only repenting themselves truly, doe trust in Gods mercy through Iesus Christ, but also doe exercise themselves in all good works, & as saith S. Peter 1, do endeuour to shew in their faith, strength; in their strength, skill; in their skill, staiednes; in their staiednes, patience; in their patience, godlines; in their godliness, brotherlines; & in their brotherlines, louingnes. The members of Christ are they that take paine to frame and fashion themselves like vnto their head, as much as can be in this life; assuring themselves that it is not possible for the head to be of one will, and the members of another. Gods elect or chosen, are they that endeuour to be holy and vnblameable before him in loue.

Marks of christianity

x Gal. 5. 24

y Ro 8. 14

2 2 Pe. 1. 5

a Eph. 1. 22

Those, those be the marks wherby a man may and ought to discern them from the vnbeleeuers, the heathenish, the vnholy, the children and lims of the diuill, and finally from all kinds of false Christians.

In respect whereof it is not amisse to alledge the saying of Sainr Augustine. The wicked man, saith he b, may haue baptisin, he may haue the gift of prophecying, hee may receiue the Sacrament of the body & blood of our Lord, he may beare the name of a Christian, and haue Christs name in his mouth, and he may haue other vertues: but charity is the thing which the wicked cannot haue, it is peculiar to the true

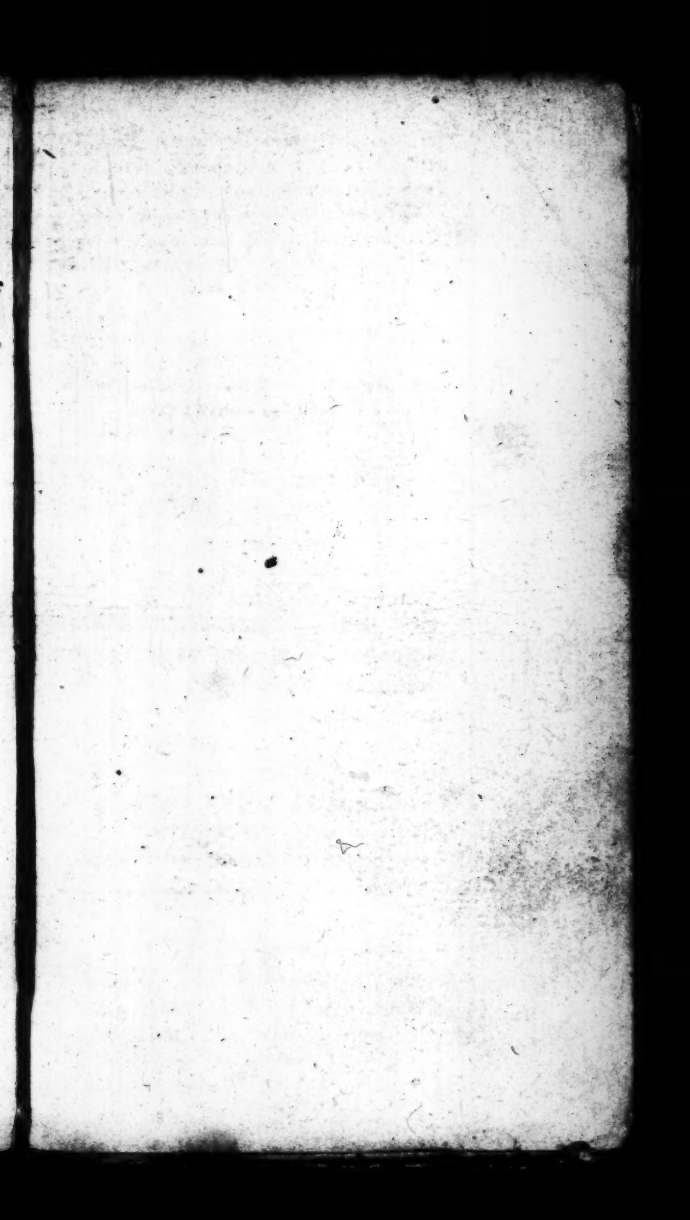
b August. de laude charitatis.

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11 *1 Cor. 11* true Christians. And therefore (saith he)
let every man examine himselfe what he lo-
neth *d*, and thereby he shall finde to what
21 Citie hee belongeth. If he loue the world
and worldly things, that is to wit, fleshli-
nesse, money, or honour, he is a citizen of
Babylon. But if he loue God, he is a Citi-
zen of Ierusalem. Hee is good and righte-
ous, and therefore he must not doubt,
but that God will at that day
giue vnto him the crown
of righteousnesse.
AMEN.

20 MA 59

A. G.



The first booke of the IMITATION OF CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

That all worldly things are vaine, and
to be contemned.

HE which followeth mee, saith Christ, *Ioh. 8, 12* doth not walke in darknesse, but hath the light of life: by which words wee are inioyned to imitate his manners and conuersation, if wee desire trulie to be enlightened, and deliuered from all blindnes of hart.

Wherefore it is our parts, most earnestly to consider what the conuersation of our Sauour was.

The doctrine of Christ surpasseth all the learning euen of the best men *6*, and a man endued with his spirit, *Ioh. 7, 14* findeth an hidden, & heauenly Man-
ner in his words, but for want of the *Ren. 2, 17* Spirit of Christ *4*, many thogh much *Ioh. 14, 26* they heare, yet little they profit by *Ioh. 16, 13* the preaching of the Gospell.

Wherefore, if any would fully vn-
derstand

The first booke

derstand, and with pleasure attaine to the knowledge of our Saviours words, he must iudicour to frame his life after his examples.

What auaieth it thee subtilly to dispute about the Trinitie, if thou lacke humilitie, and so displease the Trinitie?

Doubtless darke sayings make not an holy man: but a vertuous life bringeth into the fauour of God.

For my part, I had rather finde my selfe converted from sinne, than cunningly define what sinne is.

1 Cor.
13.2

If thou hast the whole Bible; yet, and the sayings of all Philosophers to at thy fingers end, what art thou the better if thou bee out of charitie and the fauour of God?

Eccl. 3.2
& 12.8.

Vanity of vanities, and all is vanitie, save onely to loue and to serue God sincerely.

1 co. 1.20
Mat. 6.19
Pl. 19.6, 7
& 38.7.

When all is done, the true wisdom is, by contemning the world, to goe on towards heauen.

Eccl. 2.9
Pr. 18.18.
Plal. 62.9.

It is vanitie for a man to seek transitorie riches, and to trust in them. It is vanitie to hunt after preferment, and to be puffed vp.

1 Pto. 6.25
Gal. 5.16

It is vanitie to follow & fauour the lusts of the flesh, which one day thou

Chap. 2.

3

Shunne vaine glory

of the Imitation of Christ.

thou wilt rue full grievously.

Vanity it is to desire a long life *m*, *m* Wis. 4.8
and not to care for a good life *n*. *n* Ro. 8.12

It is vanitie to behold the time present, and not to fore, see what will come hereafter *o*. *o* Sl. 18.13

And vanitie it is to couet those things which passe away most swiftly *p*, and not to hasten thither where is *p* 2 pe. 3. 10
joy without end *q*. *q* Re. 5. 16

Forget not the prouerb *r*. The eye *r* Eccl. 1.8
is not satisfied with seeing, nor the
care with hearing.

Wherefore endeavour thou to withdraw thy selfe from the loue of this world, and looke on things which are not *s*. For they which gae *s* Ioh. 2. 15
the raines to their desires *n*, both de- *Col. 3. 12*
file their consciences with sinne, and *2 Cor. 4. 18*
slay their soules through Gods dis- *n* Ia. 1. 1
pleasure *n*. *n* Wis. 1. 3
12. 15

CHAP. II.

Against vaine glory in spiri-
tull things.

ALL men naturally desire to knowe: but what is know-
ledge without the feare of *1 Cor. 13. 2*
God? *2 Cor. 8. 12*

C. 2

uy

The first booke

try swaine fearing God, is better than
a proude Philosopher which stareth
vpon the starres, and careth not for
himselfe *b*.

b Luk. 12
56. 57

Hee which knoweth himselfe tho-
roughly, esteemeth of himselfe but
lightly *c*, and weigheth nought the
praise of men.

c Lu. 18. 13

If I had all knowledge and had not
loue *d*, what would that profit me be-
fore God, who will iudge me accor-
ding to my deeds *e*?

d 1 Cor.
13. 2

e Pl. 62. 12

Mat. 15. 27

Rom. 2. 6

f Eccl. 1

17. 18

Study not ouer earnestly for know-
ledge, for that is but a vexation of
the spirit *f*, and a deceiuing of the
minde.

For learned men com only would
be knowne and accounted wise *g*.

g 1 Cor. 8

Many things there be, which kno-
wen, but little, if they doe any thing,
profit the soule: and he is extreamely
foolish, that casteth his minde vpon
any thing which tends not vnto his
euerlasting wel-fare *h*.

h Mat. 6. 33

Luk. 12. 31

i Pr. 15. 15

j Pet. 2. 19

k 1 Cor.

15. 12

l Ioh. 2

20. 21

Much wordes doe not satisfie the
mind, but a good conscience is a con-
tinuall feast, and maketh a man with
boldnes to approach before God *k*.

By how much thou knowest moe,
and better things then other men, by
so much shall thy paines bee greater,
and

of the Imitation of Christ.

and more grieuous l then others, vn- l Lu. 22. 17
less thou liue by so much better then and 16. 23
other folkes. Jam. 4. 7

So then let none art, nor know-
ledge make thee proud: but hauing
knowledge, be thou more humble m. m Ec. 1. 13
And if in thine opinion, thou know- Ro. 11. 20
est much n, knowe thou that far mote n 1 Ti. 6. 3
things there bee which thou knowest
not: and neuer be proude man, but
confesse thine ignorance.

Why preferrest thou thy selfe be-
fore others o, seeing that many there o Jer. 9. 23
be better learned, and more than i cor. 1. 19
thy selfe? 1 Tim. 1. 7

If thou wilt be learned, and knowe
indeede, then studie to be vknowne,
and to be obscure p. p 1 Cor.

For the true and perfect knowledge 2. 1
isto know and abase our selues: and
he which will esteeme lightly of him-
selfe, & greatly of others q, is doubt- q Phil. 2. 3
lesse a wile and perfect man. Ro. 10. 13

When thou seest one openly so of Ma. 18. 4
send r, and grieuously to transgresse, r Ro. 11. 17
conceiue not by and by better of thy
selfe the of him, for thou knowest not
how soone thou maist fall thy selfe s. s 1 cor. 1. 2

For in very deede wee are fraile t. t 1a. 2. 13
but thinke none more fraile then thy
selfe u. Gal. 6. 14

CHAP. III.

*Of the true knowledge, or
knowledge of the
truth.*

• Wis. 9.4

Ioh. 14.6

• 1 cor. 2.1

• 2 cor. 2.6

1 cor. 13.2

• Ma. 13.13

Mat. 22.16

• Tit. 3.9

• Ti. 2.26

HAppy is that man whom the Truth it selfe *a*, not letters, nor figures, which vanish, *b* do teach. For our own opinions and wits, do many times deceive, and seldom profit vs. What auaieth it subtilly to dispute about obscure & dark things *b*, the ignorance whereof, shall bee no hinderance vnto vs at the day of Indgement *c*?

Certainely, it is egregious folly to bend our wits vnto curious and hurtfull things, neglecting profitable and necessarie matters: to haue a thorow insight in profane thinges, and to haue no sight at all in Gods will and word *d*.

What should we passe for tearmes and questions *e*? For hee is rid from sundry opinions, whom the euerlasting Word doth speake vnto.

For by one word all things were made *f*: and one worde all speak, one Word which was in the beginning, speaketh

of the Imitation of Christ.

speake vnto all, without whom no
man g can either iudge or vnderstand g Luke 10
the truth. 22.

Now hee, to whome all things are
but one thing, which draweth vnto
one thing all things, and seeth all
things in one thing h, doubtlesse abi- h Ioh. 7. 21
deth both constant in mind, and con-
tinually in God.

O God which art the truth i make i Ioh. 14. 6.
mee one with thee in perpetuall cha-
ritie k.

Many times to read much, and to k i Ioh. 4.
heare much it irke me: what doeu- 16
er I can either wish or desire, it is in
thee l.

All Teachers be ye silent m, and all m Mat. 23. 8.
creatures holde your peace n, but m Zec. 1. 17.
speake Lord, speake thou onely vn- n Heb. 1. 2.
to me. For the nigher one is to him- 19.
selfe, and the lesse hee wandereth a-
broad, the more easily he conceiueth,
and the more excellent things, be-
cause he taketh the light of his vnder-
standing from aboue.

A pure mind and a constant is not
distracted diuers wayes, because it
doth all things to the glory of God
& laboureth earnestly to be free from
selfe-loue o. For, what doth more
hinder & hurt a man, then the vanity

Better to be well mane-

8

Chap. 8

red then well learned.

The first booke

p Ephc. 4. affections of the minde p.

22

A good and godly man, before he
Iam. 1, 13 goeth about any matter, consulteth
q Sir. 37, 16 first with himselfe q, and is neuer
drawne away by wicked affections,
but maketh them to serue at the cō-
mandement of reason.

Of all combats, the foremost is to con-
quer our selues; and of all cares, the
chiefest should bee to waite strong a-
gainst vice, and continually to profit

p Eph. 4, 11 more & more in vertue & holinesse r.

12. 13, &c.

The greatest perfection of this
Col. 3, 1, 2. life, is not without imperfection s, &
2 Pe. 3, 18 when we are best learned, wee are ig-
norant in many thinges t.

s 1 Cor. 13, 9

To conceiue modestly of our
u pro. 3, 13. selues u, is a readier way vnto happi-
Gala. 6, 3. nesse, then earnestly to studie to bee
w 1 Cor. deeply learned w.

13. 2

And yet is not science or know-
ledge to be contemned, because bee-
ing rightly considered it is good, and

y 2 Cor. 12 allowed of God y. But for all that, the
8. goodnes of man z, is better then his

z pr. 19, 22 knowledge, and a good life is to bee
1 Tim. 4, 6 preferred afore learning a.

a Si. 19, 23 But because many desire to knowe
rather then to please God, it falleth
out commonly that they erre, & reap
either no fruite, or very little by all
their

of the Imitation of Christ. then well learned.
their studie b. b 1 Cor. 4.

Now, would they bee as earnest in rooting out vices e, and in planting vertues, as they are diligent in proposing questions, certainly both the rude multitude would be more vertuous, and the learned sort more sage then they are.

Assuredly, at the day of Iudgement, we must tell, not what wee haue read, but what wee haue done d : and how religiously wee haue liued, not how rhetorically we haue perswaded.

Goe to then ; where be now those masters so famous, & so pointed at in their life time e, whose places such haue, as perhaps neuer think on the

In their life time who but they ? now where are they ? So quickly vanisheth the glory of the world f. Now if they had liued according to their knowledge (and known rightly the word of God) then had they studied to their everlasting praise and profit

Alas, how many euen of the learned sort, perish in this world for lack of the feare of God h ! And because they couet to bee rather famous then vertuous, they are carried away with vaine imaginations i.

So that in truth, hee which loueth

The first booke

k Col. 2. 14 much k is famous, he which despiseth
 Eph. 3. 17 glory k, is glorious: hee which hum-
 19. bleth himselfe is honourable m; hee
 l Math. 23. which counteth all things but dung
 ver. 8. &c. to win Christ n, is prudent; and hee
 Mat. 1. 4. is learned indeed which abandoneth
 m pr. 5. 33. his owne wil, to do the will of God.
 Lu. 18. 14.
 n Phi. 3. 8
 o Ioh. 7. 16
 17. 18.

CHAP. III.

*Wisedome must be vsed in all
 our dealings.*

a I Ioh. 4. 1 **B**elieue not euery saying or spi-
 rit a, but examine the matter wise-
 ly by the word of God.
 b Gen. 6. 5 For alas, naturally wee are giuen b,
 bo. h to thinke and speake rather ill,
 c Eccl. 8. 21 then well of others.
 d ps. 116. 11 But good men belieue not euerie-
 Sir. 19. 16 mans words, because they know how
 lam. 3. 2. that we are prone alwaies vnto euil c,
 e To. 4. 18 and that the best offendeth with his
 lam. 1. 19. tongue d.
 f pr. 17. 12 It is a point of great wisedome to
 g Iob. 22. be neither heady e in our actions, nor
 h I. 12. obstinate in opinion. As great wise-
 Sir. 12. 4. dome is it, neither to belieue euerie
 pr. 17. 4. mans words g, nor by and by to re-
 b Su. 18. 7. hear that which hath been told h.

Take

Chap. 5. *rr* *How to read the Scriptures
of the Imitation of Christ.*

Take counsell of a godly man *i*, *i* Si. 17. 10
whom thou knowest to keepe the
commandements of God, and follow
the counsell of the wise *k* before thine *k* pr. 12. 15
owne fantasies. A good life maketh
a godly wise man *l*. *l* Pro. 9. 19

The more a man humbleth him-
selfe afore God *m*, the more wise hee *m* Pro. 1. 4
is and quiet in all his affaires.

CHAP. V.

*How to reade and study the holy Scrip-
tures with profit.*

Looke in the holy Scriptures for
truth, not for eloquence: & read
them with that minde where-with
they were written, for thine everla-
sting profit *a*, not for a polished *a* lo. 3. 19
phrase.

Study as wel godly booke, though
they bee rude *b*, as workes both elo- *b* 1 Cor.
quent for stile, and profound for me- *i*. 17
thod.

Respect not in the Author either
learning or ignorance, but let the
pure loue of the simple truth allure
thee to read *c*: and neuer mark who *c* Ps. 119.
speaketh, but what is said.

Men die *d*, but the word of God *d* Ps. 119. 48
shall

The first booke

e Esa. 49. 8 shall stand for ever e; and God sundry
Psa. 100. 5 waies speaketh vnto vs, not respecting
Psa. 117. 2 our persons f.

f Gal. 2. 6 Many times through our owne cu-
2 Pet. 1. 17 riosity, we profit little in the reading
Deu. 10. 17 of good bookes, whilst wee stand to
discusse those things which ought sim-
aly to be ouer-past.

It thou desirest to reape commo-
g Esa. 66. 2 ditie, reade with all humility g, sim-
b Ier. 9. 23 plicitie and zeale; and neuer couet to
24 be counted learned h.

1 Cor. 1 Bee questioning alwaies with god-
29 31 ly men, and harken with silence vnto
i Sira. 6. 36 their sayings; be not offended with
Pro. 13. 20 the darke speech of thine elders: for
they neuer speake without cause why.

CHAP. VI.

*That inordinate and carnall affections
must be mortified.*

e Pr. 18. 14

Esa. 48. 22

I. 15. 13

f Pr. 13. 10

Pro. 15. 3

Eccl. 5. 9

e Mat. 5. 3

Mat. 11. 29

Pro. 1. 16

Mat. 21. 10

VHen-soeuer a man dooth
couet a thing immoderate-
ly, straight way his minde is out of
quiet a.

The proud & the couetous be euer
vexed b, but he which is poore c, and
meek in spirit d, liueth in great ease e.

Hee which doth not mortifie the
inor-

of the Imitation of Christ.

inordinate affections of his minde f, Ro. 8. 13
may easily be carried away to wicked- Gal. 6. 8
nesse, and with trifling things bee o- Col. 3. 5
uercome.

Hee that is weake, worldly, & car-
nal g, can no waies withdraw himselfe g Ro. 8. 5
from earthly desires h; and therefore &c.
when hee resisteth them, it grieveth h Gal. 5. 17
him; when he is contraried, hee fret- &c.
teth; and if he fulfill his mind, he sin-
neth, and by and by doth wound his
conscience i, because he followeth his i Iam. 1. 15
desires, which in stead of that peace Ro. 3. 9 & 8
which he looked for, bring continual
disquietnesse k. h Pr. 14. 13

Wherefore, the true quietnesse of Eia. 37. 10
minde is attained, not by following, i i
but by resisting wicked affections l, l i Pet. 1. 2
and remaineth in him which is fer- i i
uent, & godly zealous m, not in car- m Gal. 5. 21
nall and worldly men n. n Ro. 13. 14

CHAP. VII.

*Against vaine hope, and
vaine glorie.*

IT is a vaine thing to trust either in &c.
man a, or in any other creature b, ler. 17. 5
Bee not ashamed to bee in b Ph. 2. 10
subiection to others c, for Christ f. 8.

like, c Gal. 5. 13

The first booke

ake, nor if thou be poore in this present life *d*.

Depend not vpon thy selfe, but put thy confidence in the Lord *e*. Do thy part notwithstanding, and God will blisse thine indeuour *f*.

Trust not to thine own knowledge, neither doe thou repose any confidence in the wit of man *g*, but only in the Lord *h* which exalteth the humble, and bringeth downe the proud *i*.

Glory thou neither in thy riches *k*, if thou haue much, nor of thy friends if they bee mighty, but in the Lord, who both giueth all things *l*, & gladly would giue himselfe afore all things.

Be thou proud neither of thy beautie, nor highnesse. For a little sicknes doth both deforme the one, and consume the other *n*.

Like not ouer-well of thy selfe, if thou haue a good wit, least thou offend god therby, which gaue whatso-
euer good thing thou hast by nature *o*.

Thinke not thy selfe better than other men *p*, least God who knoweth what is in man *q*, condemne thee utterly for thine arrogant conceit.

Dooest thou well? Take heede of pride, God iudgeth not as man doth *r*. For that commonly displeaseth him,

of the Imitation of Christ.

him which please th man f.

f Esa. 55.8

If thou hast any goodnesse in thy selfe, think that another hath more: 1 Cor. 14. so shalt thou alwayes retaine the true ver. 3. modestie of minde.

To debase thy selfe euen vnder all men can neuer hurt thee, but to prefer thy selfe afore one man, may easily Luk. 18. ly condemne thee. 11. 12. 13.

The humble man is alwaies in quiet Math. 20. et x, but the haughtie minde fumeth 11. 12. commonly with indignation y. 2 1 Pet. 5. 5. 6.

7 12. 4. 1. 2.

CHAP. VIII.

What company is to be followed or refrained.

O Pen not thine hart vnto euerie man a, but communicate thine a Sir. 8. 9. affares to the wise & godly b, b Si. 37. 12.

Acquaint thy selfe with reuerend c Sirac. 8. 8. old men c, and delight not much in d Si. 13. 24. the company of youth and strangers. e Pro. 23. 3.

Flatter not the wealthy d, and take f Si. 13. 16. heed of the mighty e, ioine thee to g 2 Sa. 2. thine equals f which are godly g, and ver. 26. 27. do that which is honest h, and for the h 2 Tim. 2. publique welfare i. 1 Eph. 4. 11.

Be familiar with no woman vn-
lawfull

The firſt booke

k Pro. 5. 3. 8 lawfully *k* ; but generally commend
l Pr. 15. 39. as many as are good *l*.

1 Pet. 3. 6 Wiſh to be familiar but with God
m Ph. 3. 30 onely, and hiſ holy Angels *m*, and vt-
n Pro. 2. 24 terly auoide the company of ſome
and 29. 24. men *n*.

Sirac. 19. 3. Haue peace with all men *o*, but not
o Ro. 12. 18 familiarity *p*.

1 Theſ. 3. 2 Many times it falleth out, that wee
p 1 cor. 5. 9 loue a ſtranger through the report of
Pſa. 16. 4. 5. others, whom afterwards we hate, ha-
uing tryed his conditions. And many
times we diſpleaſe other by our lewd
behauour, whom wee thought wee
ſhould pleaſe right well, if wee had
but their acquaintance.

CHAP. IX.

*Of obedience and ſub-
jection.*

1 Pet. 2. 13. 15. **I**T is greatly for our behoofe to
liue vnder others *o*, not as we liſt
our ſelues, and at more eaſe liue
ſubiects, than rulers.

1 Eph. 6. 6. Many obey for feare *b* rather then
Colo. 3. 22. for loue, & grudgingly, not gladly.
But ſuch can neuer haue the libertie
of minde, before they obey both for

con-

of the Imitation of Christ.

conscience e, & for the Lords sake d. e Ro. 13, 5

Wherefoerer thou becommest, d 1 pe. 2, 13
looke neuer to liue at ease, vnlesse
thou keepe thy selfe within thy cal-
ling, and obey thy Superiours.

The opinion and change of places
hath deceiued many a man.

Euery man by nature would fol-
low his owne minde, and fauourerh
such as are of his opinion : but if wee
feare God, we will sometime change
our mind for quietnes sake e. e Ps. 32, 14

For who is so wise that hee know- Rom. 12, 3
eth all things f ? Therefore trust not f Ro. 12, 6
too much vnto thine own opinion g, 1 Cor. 12, 8
but willingly giue care to the iudge- g Pro. 3, 5
ment of others h. h Pro. 12,

And albeit thou stand in a good 8, 15
matter, yet if it bee more expedient
to haue it otherwise, alter thy minde,
and thou shalt doe better i. i 1 Cor. 9

I haue heard many times, that it is 1, 19. &c.
easier, yet better, to heare and take,
then to giue counsell k : & he bewrai- k Pr. 11, 27
eth his pride and pertinacie l, which l Pro. 21, 9
will stick in an opinion, though it be
good, if wiser then himselfe, through
deeper iudgement & circumstances
would haue it altered.

CHAP. X.

*Against idle meetings, and
vane talke.*

SHunne the common meetings of
a Math. 14. men as much as thou canst a. For,
23. to talke of worldly matters b, dooth
b pr. 10. 14. greatly hurt vs, mean we neuer so well.
The reason is, We are easily drawn
away with vanitie. And for my part,
I haue wished many times that I had
been silent and absent.

Now, if any would examine the
cause why so gladly wee chat and prate
together, seeing we seldome speak
without offence to God, and hurt to
our conscience, he shall finde it to be
euen comfort forsooth, and recreation.
For the more earnestly wee couet
& desire a thing, or the more certain-
ly we knowe any euill to bee towards
vs, the more vehemently wee loue to
talke and thinke thereof, albeit com-
monly to small profit or purpose.

For this outward comfort dooth
not a little hinder the inward conso-
lation.

Wherefore, wee are to watch and
e Ma. 24. 41 pray e that wee spende not the time
e Ma. 12. 36 idly d: and if wee will, or must of ne-
cessity

of the Imitation of Christ.

cessity speake, let our speech be good to the vse of edifying e, that it may *Ep. 4.29* minister grace vnto the hearers.

To babble much wee should not vse, both because the custome there- to is nought, and for that in many wordes there cannot want iniquitie. But godly speech greatly auaieth to *f Pr. 10.19* a vertuous life *g*, especially where *g Pr. 10.11* men of like minds and spirit are cou- *Pro. 18.20* pled together in the Lord. *Luk. 6.44*

CHAP. XI.

*How to come to quietnes in minde,
and a godly
life.*

Vould we not intermeddle *a 1 Tim. 5* with other mens doings & *13* sayings, wee might liue at great ease and quietnesse. But how is it possible that hee should bee quiet, which busieth himselfe with those matters that touch him not; which picketh occasion to goe abroad, and little or seldome can keep himselfe at home. Blessed are the meeke *b*: for they haue *1 Mar. 9.7* much rest. *1 Mar. 11*

In olde time many attained vnto *25* singular perfection, & were zealous-
lie

The first booke

lie addicted to the contemplation of
 heavenly things. And how so; They
 mortified their earthly members *d*.
d Col. 3. 5 We loose the bridle to all beastly de-
 sires, and care altogether for tempo-
 ral trash *e*. Seldom, if at all, we subdue
 our affections indeede, neither desire
 wee to profit more and more daily in
 well doing. If therefore we remain in
 religion, either cold or lukewarme *f*,
 what maruell?

But were wee dead vnto our owne
 selues *g*, and not intangled inwardly
 with perturbations, doubtlesse wee
 should taste the vspeakable sweetnes
 of a godly life, and be inflamed with
 a burning desire of celestiall things.

For in very deede, the greatest (if
 not the whole) let from goodnesse is,
 because we are in bondage to vile af-
 fections *h*, and labour not to followe
 the foot-steps of the faithfull.

Hence it is, that if wee be neuer so
 lightly touched with aduersitie, wee
 are meruailously dismaide, and seeke
 help of man *i*, which cometh from
 the Lord *k*.

Now would we keepe our places *l*,
 like valiant souldiers, the Lord would
 helpe vs from aboue. For he is ready
 to assist them which serue him *m*, and
 will

of the Imitation of Christ.

will giue vs victory if we fight his battell. But if wee place our religion in doing these outward things, in short time our religion with them will vtterly decay. *1a. 1. 12* *Col. 2. 22*

Wherefore the axe must bee laide vnto the roote; and our wicked affections cut off; which is the onely way to finde rest for our soules. *Mar. 3. 10*

If euery yeare wee would roote out a vice frō our minds, oh how quickly should wee prooue good men! but alas, we see by experience, that after many yeares, wee are worser than when at the first wee professed religion. And he is an holy man counted now adaiers, which can retaine a part of his first & former zeale, yet should the fire of godlinesse increase daily, & be inflamed more and more.

The remedie whereof is, at the beginning to straine our selues, so shall we afterward do all things at pleasure.

I confesse indeede, it is hard to leaue old woonts; and as hard, yea harder for a man to bridle his affections. At the beginning therefore strue with thine inclination, and leaue a wicked custom, least otherwise when you would, you cannot so easily. For it is impossible that wee should vanquish *Lu. 9. 59*

The first booke

quish and subdue mighty, which cannot overcome light & trifling things.

Oh, if thou wouldest consider what quietnes to thy selfe, & ioy to others thou shouldest bring by godly and good behauiour, doubtes thy chiefest care would bee how to liue in the sight of God religiously, & honestly in the eyes of men.

Lu. 15. 7

CHAP. XII.

Of the profit gotten by aduersitie.

IT is good for vs sometime to suffer affliction. For it maketh vs to knowe our selues in this World a,

apf. 19. 67 and to repose no confidence in any creature b.

pl. 18. 5 &c It is good for vs sometime to be ill

c Mat. 5. 11 spoken of, & ill thought of, althogh wee deserue not the same. For that

d 2 Sam. 6 bringeth to humiliry d, and driueth

10. 11. 12 from pride: And the more earnestly

Rom. 5. 3 wee call for the testimony of God

e Ro. 8. 16 in our conscience e, when wee are

1 pet. 4. 14 contemned among men, and of no credit.

f Pl. 9. 4 So that euery man ought so to de-

2 cor. 1. 9 pend vpon God f, that hee neede not

care

of the Imitation of Christ.

care for any worldly comfort.

For a good man the more hee is troubled, either outwardly in body, or inwardly in minde, the more hee considereth how greatly hee standeth in neede of Gods assistance, without which, hee seeth he can do no good. *g. g. phi. 2. 12.* Then he sorroweth and sobbeth, and desireth to bee deliuered from miserie: then it grieneth him to liue any longer *h.*, and wisheth to bee loosed, *b. Ro. 5. 21.* and to be with Christ *i.*, and then hee *i. phi. 1. 24.* perceiueth full well, that in this life we cannot finde perfect peace, and securitie *k.*

k. Io. 16. 20

Reue. 7. 16

CHAP. XIII.

That no man either is, or hath bin without temptation, & how both to suffer and resist the same.

AS long as wee liue in this world, wee cannot be without tentations and troubles. And that made Iob to call mans life heere on earth *a.*, the *a. Iob. 7. 1.* dayes of &c.

Wherefore it standeth euery man vpon to thinke heereof, and to watch in prayer *b.*, that the diuell haue no *b. Mar. 26.* vantage against vs, which neuer sleepeth *Mar. 26. 41.*

peth, but rangeth about alwaies see-

e 1 pet. 5, 8 king whom he may deuoure e.

Reu. 12, 12 The best man is tempted sometime

d Sirac. 2, 1. d ; and to be vterly without tentati-
1 cor. 16, 13 on it is impossible.

Heb. 12, 8 Yea expedient it is sometime that

e 1 ac. 1, 21 we be tempted e, though we like not

f He. 12, 11 thereof f; for thereby wee are hum-

Ps. 119, 67. bled, purged g and instructed b.

g Job. 5, 17 All the holy Fathers haue endured

Wil. 3, 5 tentation, and been schooled there-

b He. 12, 5. by i, but they which fainted vnder

Sirac. 8, 12 the same, are vterly cast away k.

1 pet. 1, 6, 7 There is no calling so holy, nor

Judg. 8, 25 place so solitarie, but you shall finde

k Lu. 8, 13 there both trouble to try you, & ad-

Heb. 12, 8 uersitie to disquiet you; no, let not

man looke in this life to be free from

temptation. For wee haue that in our

selues which tempteth vs l, insomuch

as we are borne in concupiscence, &

conceiued in sinne m.

Tentations come vpon tentati-

ons, miseries vpon miseries, and al-

waies we haue somewhat to suffer: be-

cause we are fallen from the estate of

our felicity.

Many whilst they shun some trou-

bles, fall into worse o. For they are

not auoided by flight only p, but by

patience q; and true modestie ma-

keth.

keeth to preuaile ouer enemies.

Hee which onely outwardly shunneth tentations, and plucketh not vp the root frō whence they doe spring, is so far frō escaping them, that they assaile him the sooner, & make him much worse then he was before.

RM. 12. 45

By sufferance, through Gods grace thou shalt more preuaile, than by stubbornness and resistance.

Heb. 6. 4

Rom. 5. 3

Iam. 1. 12

In thy trouble vse counsell. If thy neighbour be afflicted, giue him no ill word, but comfort rather, which thou wouldest haue thy selfe, if thou wert in his case.

1 Co. 10

10

Gal. 6. 1

Iob. 6. 14

The cause of all wicked tentations is inconstancy of minde, and lack of faith. For as a ship without a stern, is carried to and fro with winde and weather; so the wauering and vnconstant man is diuersly tempted.

Ma. 8. 26

Mat. 18. 31

Ia. 1. 6, 8

As fire trieth yron, so temptation trieth man. What wee are able to doe we knowe not many times: but what we are, temptation shewes.

Wis. 3. 6

Sirac. 2. 5

1 Cor. 3.

To auoid temptation it is good to be circumspect at the beginning of the same. For the enemy is the more easily overcome, when wee shut the doore of our vnderstanding against him, and meete him at the threshold.

13.

Iam. 1. 12

The first booke

as soone as he begins to knock. And therefore saide a certaine Poet right well to this effecte.

e Ouid in
his 3 booke

De arte a-
mandi.

Learn be-
fore thou

speake, and
use physick

when be sick.

Sira. 18. 28

The steps
to sinne.

{ If thou bee sicke, preuent the worst
And seeke for remedy at the first.
For when a sickness hath taken root
If thou take physick it will not boot.

For first commeth into our minds a bare cogitation of euill, then followeth a strong imaginatiō, out of which proceedeth a wonderfull delectation, wicked motions, and assent vnto sin, and so by little and little, the malicious enemy entrencheth in, when at the first he might easily be kept out.

Wherby thus we get, that the longer we tary before we resist, both wee are the weaker when we do resist, and our enemy the stronger whom wee must resist. Som, as soon as they begin to amend their liues others at their end, and diuers all their life time are tempted and afflicted: againe there bee, which are but lightly assaulted: which thing God, who worketh all things for the safety of his Elect, bringeth to passe according to the wisdom & equity of his heavenly will.

Rom. 8. 8

And therefore wee must not despaire when wee are tempted, but so much

much the more earnestly pray vnto
God, that he would vouchsafe to help
vs in all extremities, & according to
the words of Paul, giue issue that we *f 1 Cor.*
may be able to beare our tentation. *10.13*

So then in all tentations and trou-
bles, let vs humble our selues vnder
the mighty hand of God. For hee *g 1 pet. 5.6*
exalteth the humble and meek h. *1 am. 4.10*

In aduersitie man is tried, how hee *h 1 am. 4.6*
hath profited in well doing, and so be *Pro. 3.34*
getteth not only fauor before God *k 2 Cor.*
but also fame among men. For it is *3.13*
no great thing for a man in prosperi- *k 1 pet. 1.6*
tie to seeme deuout and zealous: but
hee which continueth patient in the
time of aduersitie *l*, will doubtlesse, *1 Rom. 5.8*
prooue a perfect man. *1 am. 1.3*

Many ouercome great troubles,
which are overcome by small, and
daily: but such cannot trust to them-
selues in great, which are so weake in
trifling things.

CHAP. XIII.

Against rash Iudgement.

LOoke warily into thy selfe, and
iudge not other men. For in *Mat. 7. 3*
iudging others, wee labour *Luk. 6.37*
vainely, erre commonly, and
easily

b Iam. 4. 11 easily offended b; but in iudging and
e 1 Cor. 11. 13 examining our selues e weereape sin-
gular commoditie.

d Ro. 2. 1 As we fancie a thing, so wee iudge
thereof: and blinded with priuate af-
fection, wee commonly giue partiall
sentence d.

Now were the loue of God alwaies
our onely guide; our senses, which
are enemies to truth, would not so
easily trouble vs. But cōmonly some-
what either lurketh within, or chan-
ceth without, which carrieth vs away.

Many in their dooings vñwitting-
ly seek themselves, which are so long
quiet in mind, as they inioy all things
according to their wish: but if any
thing fall out otherwise, then they
would, they chafe, fret and fume.

Great dissension riseth many times
euen among friends and countymen,
yea among the godly & zealous to,
through diuersitie of opinions. For
such is our nature, wee can hardly
breake an old custome: and further
than he seeth will no man gladly goe.
But if we cleaue, or depend more vp-
on reason and sense e, than vpon that
vertue which bringeth vnder the o-
bedience of Christ, let vs neuer looke
to be inflamed with the light of gods
holy

of the Imitation of Christ.

holy spirit. For God will bee serued
not with a peece of man, but with
whole man *f*, neither doth he allowe *f* Deut. 6.5
reason to iudge of religion. Luk. 10.27

CHAP. XV.

*Of the workes of charitie, and how
to doe good workes.*

VVE ought not to doe wicked-
ly for any thing *a*, nor for a- *a* Rom. 3.8
ny mans sake *b*, albeit in respect of *b* Ro. 8.38
the weake *c*, a good worke may bee *c* 1 Cor. 9
vndone sometimes, or done other- 20.21.22
wise. And that is not to neglect a
good worke, but to leaue one good
worke to doe a better. If thou haue
not loue, thine outward deedes profit
nothing *d*: if thou haue loue, bee thy *d* 1 Cor.
works neuer so small and simple they 13.2
profit much. For God respecteth not
what is done, but how, and with what
affection a thing is done. *e* Lu. 7.46

He doth much that loueth much *f*. *f* Luk. 7.47
Hee doth much that doth a thing *g* Mat. 26
it should be done *g*. And hee doth *h*, *h*
that seeketh the common wel. fare be- *h* 1 Cor.
fore his owne profit *h*. 13.5

It many times seemeth a charitable *Carnall*
deede, which indeed is a carnall. For *works what*
that which is done, as commonly

The first booke

workes are done, either of affection, or desire of gaine, or hope of reward, which are carnall inclinations, is doubtlesse a carnall, and not a charitable worke.

Fruits of
charity.

1 Io. 2. 15

Iam. 4. 4

1 Cor.

13. 4

1 Ier. 9. 23

1 Cor.

1. 3. 1

1 Iam. 1. 17

Ro. 7. 15

Ec. 1. 13

Phil. 3. 8

A man indued with perfect charity serueth not his owne turne, but onely in all things seeketh the glory of god. He enuieth not *k*. For hee loueth no priuate ioy *l*, neither will reioyce in himselfe, but in the Lord *m*, whose blessing he desireth before all things. He ascribeth no goodnesse vnto any, but acknowledgeth all thinges to come of God, from whom euery good gift & euery perfect gift doth proceed *n*, & in whom all the Saints doe rest in perpetuall blisse *o*. Finally, he which hath but a spark of this true charity, accounteth al worldly thinges but meere vanity *p*.

CHAP. XVI.

That men which offend, must bee borne with all sometimes.

1 Thes.

3. 14

1 Esai. 10

14

That which thou canst not amend neither in thy selfe, nor others, must patiently be suffered *a*, till God otherwise worke *b*.

Think

Thinke with thy selfe, that per-
chance God doth it to try thy pati-
ence *b*, without which our merits do *b* Ro. 5. 3. 4
little availe: notwithstanding in thy *Iam. 1. 3. 4*
troubles, thou oughtest to beseech
almighty God to assist thee with his
grace, that patiently thou maiest en-
dure his crosse, and triall *c*.

c Luk. 17. 5.

If any, beeing diuerse and sundry *Iam. 1. 5*
times admonished, will not amend *d*, *d* Tit. 3. 10
deale with him no more, but commit
the whole matter to G O D, that his
will, and glory may appeare in all his
creatures *e*, which knoweth well how *e* Mat. 6. 10
to turne all things: to the best.

Endeuour thy selfe patiently to
beare the faultes and infirmities of
other men, whatsoeuer they be, for *f* Gal. 6. 1. 2
so much as thou art faulty thy selfe *g*, *g* Iam. 3. 1
and must bee borne withall. And if
thou canst not be such as thou woul-
dest be, thinkest thou to make any-
ther according to thy mind?

Wee wish that others were godlie *h* Ma. 7. 3. 4
and yet wee amend not nor selues *b*. Ro. 2. 1. 2
Wee would haue others severely cor- *i* Mat. 7. 1
rected *i*, which wee refuse our selues.
We finde fault with the licentiousnes
of others, and wee our selues will not
be gaine-said: Wee seeke that others
should bee bridled by lawes, and wee
our

The first booke

our selues, refuse obedience. Where-
by it is euident, how we loue not our

k Mar. 7. 12 neighbour as our selues k.

Luk. 6. 31 If all were perfect what should wee
suffer at other mens hands, for Gods

l Mat. 5. 10 sake l ? but now it pleaseth God, that

1 pet. 4. 14. wee must beare one anothers burthen

m Gal. 6. 2 m, & that because no man is without

fault, no man but hath his burthen,

no man that can liue by himselfe, no

man but lacks aduice sometime, and

therefore we ought to suffer one with

n 1 Cor. another n, to comfort one another,

12. 26. & c. to helpe, instruct, and admonish one
another.

And neuer shall the vertue of a man
be so knowne, as by occasion of ad-

o Ia. 1. 12. uerfitie o. For, occasions make not a

p 1 Pet. 1. man fraile, but shew what he is p.

6. 7.

CHAP. XVII.

*The way to quietnesse, both temporall
and eternall.*

THou must bridle & break thy will
in many things, if thou wilt liue a

a Pl. 120. 7 quiet life a : and if thou wouldest

Mat. 5. 5. stand vpright, & go forward in godli-

b ps. 119. 19 nes, account thy self in this world but

He. 11. 15 a banished man and a pilgrim b. And

1 Pet. 1. 17 if thou desire to be a Christian, thou

must

must prooue a foole before men, for
Christs sake e.

e 1 Cor. 11

A hood or a shorne head maketh verse 23.
not a religious man; but an alterati- 1 col. 3, 18
on from vice to vertue, and a mortifi- Eph. 4. 22
cation of the lusts. Ro. 13, 12

He which loueth any thing besides 13, 14
God, and the saluation of his soule f, f Psal. 1. 19
shall find nothing but misery & lo- 29
row.

And let not him look to be long
in quiet, which laboureth not in the
sight of man to be most abiect & in- g 1 am 4. 6
ferior to all g. For thou art in this life Mat. 10. 24
to serue h, not to rule, and called to h Mat. 20
suffer; , and to labour k, nor to loy- 28.
ter and to liue at pleasure. Phil 4. 2. 7

For men are tryed in this world as ; Luk. 9. 23
gold is in the furnace: & let no man k Ge. 3. 19
looke to stand heere vpright, vnlesse l Job 23. 10
with all his hart bee humble himselfe Wild. 3. 6
for the Lords sake m. m 1 Cor. 4

10.

CHAP. XVIII.

*The vertuous life of the holy
Fathers.*

BEholde the examples of those
holic Fathers, in whom religion
and perfection did shine, & you

D 5

shall

The first booke

shall easily perceiue how little, and in a manner nothing, it is, which we do. Alacke, what is our life compared with theirs?

Those holy men and friends of Christ, did serue the Lord in hunger
 2 cor. 6. 4 and thirst, in colde and nakednesse,
 in weariness and painefulnesse, in watchings and fastings, in praiers & meditations, in manifold persecutions
 1 He. 11. 36 and troubles.

What and how great miseries did the Apostles, and Martyrs, and Confessors, and Virgins, and all which at any time followed the steps of our Sauour Christ, endure? for they had
 Job. 12. 15 ted their liues in this world, that they
 Mar. 16. 25 might saue them for eternall life.

Luk. 9. 24 O what an hard and seuerer life did
 and 17. 13 those holy Fathers leade in deserts? what long and grieuous tentations suffred they? How often did the enimie assaile them? How zealously did they offer the sacrifice of prayer vnto God With what seueritie did they tame their bodies; what study spent they to profit in religion: what conflicts had they with vices & wickednes? how vprightly did they spende their time before God?

In the day time they labored, in the night

Chap. 18. 35 *Looke vpon the holy Fathers
of the Imitation of Christ.*

night they prayed, & at no time cea- *d Ep. 6.18*
sed they from deuout meditations *d. Col. 4.2*
Finally no time was idly spent, and all
houres that they consumed seemed
very short, insomuch that many
times, for to profit their soules, they
little did regard the reliefe of their
bodies *e. Ma. 14.15*
And as for wealth, authori- *Luk. 9.12*
tie, promotion, friends, & kinsfolks, *f Ma. 16.20*
they renounced them, together with *Mar. 12.28*
all worldly things.

So that in mans eyes they were
poore *g, but in the sight of God, & in g Mat. 5.5*
respect of their vertues most mighti-
ly rich; outwardly they seemed nee-
dy *h, but inwardly they were refresh- h cor. 6.10*
ed with Gods heavenly grace, and *ip. 94.19*
comfort *i, in the world meere stran- k Ioh. 16.2*
gers *k, but to Christ friends, & fami- l Ioh. 15.15*
liars *l, in their owne iudgement most m lo. 13.6*
vile *m, & odious to the world n, but to n Ioh. 5.19*
almighty God dear and precious *o. o Ioh. 16.20*

They were humble and obedient,
and friendly and patient: Whereby
they found good successe in the spirit
and grace before God *p.*

Therefore should all godly men
follow their steps, & be more moued
by the example of the to vertue, than
of luke warme Christians, though
they be infinite, to wickednes.

Oh

Oh what zeale had the godly in the
 q^t & 4.10 Primitiue Church q^d what deuotion
 r Act. 1. 46 to prayer r^d what cōtention to excell
 in well doing? what seuerē discipline?
 what reuerence, yea what obedience
 shewed they to the doctrine of their
 teachers? Their monuments to this
 day shew, that they must needs bee
 most singularly perfect, which haue
 so valiantly subdued the world.

f Heb. 11
 30

But now adaies, if a man can but
 keepe himselfe from grosse offences,
 or refraine from reuengement, hee is
 accounted a good and perfect man.

Reu. 2. 4.
 Reu. 3. 16
 Mat. 24
 48

O the securitie of our time (which
 haue so quickly declined from our
 first heate) and loathed life, because
 we are luke-warme & weary: but
 surely it is a manifest argument that
 we are dead from well dooing, which
 see so many examples of godly men
 before vs, and follow none of them.

CHAP. XIX.

The exercise of a true Christian.

THe life of a Christian should bee
 a Mat. 5. 4 adorned with all vertues, that
 16. 20. 27 hee may bee inwardly such as he
 48 outwardly appeareth to the world as
 yea.

yea more vertuous should he be than
hee seemeth, in as much as God see-
eth our hearts *b*, whom wee must in- *b* 1 Sam.
tirely reuerence wherefoeuer wee are, 16.7
and before whom we must walke vp- *Pla*, 35.15
rightly as Angels.

Euery day we should renounce our
minde *c*, and as though we were but *c* Ro. 12.2
newly conuerted from sin, we ought
to enflame our zeale and say :

O my Lord and God assist mee, I
humbly beseech thee, in this my good
purpose and zeale, and giue me grace
euen at this present time godly to en-
ter into thy seruice. For what hither-
to I haue done is nothing.

In this our race and going forward
in godlinesse, wee must vse great dili-
gence, if wee minde to finish our
course as we should. For if he which
couragiously goes on, is tyred many
times, what wil becom of him which
either seldome or faintly setteth for-
ward ?

Many things cause vs to change
our good mindes : but wee neuer so
lightly omit spirituall exercise, but we
greatly hinder our selues thereby.

The purpose of the iust dependeth
vpon the fauour of God *d*, not vpon *d* Phi. 2.13
their owne wisdomes, on whom *e* Pro. 3.5
they

they trust in all their enterprises. For
*f*Pro. 16. 9 man may purpose *f*, but God dispo-
seth: neither can man of himselfe
bring any thing to passe.

If wee omit our accustomed exer-
cise, either for religious cause, or to
profit our brethren; wee may easily
attaine thereunto againe: but if care-
lessly, of sloth, or faintnes of minde we
neglect the same, we doe both highly
displease God, and greatly endamage
g Ia. 1. 22 our selues *g*.

Let vs doe our best, yet shall we of-
h Iam. 3. 2 fend in many things *h*. Albeit it will
bee good to shoore at some certaine
thing, and especially against those
vices, which hinder vs more then o-
thers. Wee must examine and set in
order, as well outwarde as inwarde
things, for both are necessarie to our
p Eph. 4. 20 proceeding *i*.

If thou canst not at all times take
an account of thy selfe, yet do it som-
time, and at the least once a day, to
wit, at morning and at night.

In the morning consider how thou
wilt spend thy time till evening: and
at night call into mind how thou hast
*k*pl. 13, 14 past the day, & what thy thoughts *k*,
wordes, and deedes have beene. For
thereby we commonly both displease
God

Chap. 19. 39 *The exercise of a Christian
the Imitation of Christ.*

God and offend man.

Gird thy loynes like a man l a-1 Eph. 6. 14
gainst Sathan m, bridle thy riotous ap- m 1 pet. 5. 8
petite n, so the more easily shalt thou n pr. 23. 3 I
bring vnder all the vnruely desires of
the flesh.

Bee thou at no time idle altogether
o, but alwaies either reade or write, o Pro. 6. 6
or pray, or meditate, or doe some
what for the publique welfare.

The body must bee exercised with
iudgement. For all exercises bee not
for euery man. Private exercise must
not be vled in a publike place. Albeit
thou art to take heed that thou bee
not to publikue slowe, and swift vnto
private; but hauing done thy dutie
according to thy calling, if any lei-
sure bee gotten; berake thee to thy
seife, as thy profession doth require.

All men cannot vse one exercise;
but that is for some, which is not for
others.

Againe, according to the diuersity
of times we thinke of exercises. For,
some like vs on holy dayes, some on
working dayes, some in the time of
warre, some in the time of quietnes,
some we mind when wee are pensue,
and some when wee reioyce in the
Loid p.

Good p 1 cor. 1. 3

The first booke

Good exercises should oftentimes be renewed, especially on holy dayes, as though wee were then departing out of this life, and going to the everlasting dayes of rest. And therefore at such times especially wee should shew our selues most deuout, and most carefully execute Gods hestes; looking, as it were presently for a reward of our labor from God. Which if it be deferred, let vs think with our selues that wee are not sufficientlie prepared, but vnworthy so great glorie, to be reuealed vnto vs at a time conuenient, and prepare our selues more diligently to our end.

p Luke 12.
43, 44

Happy is that seruant saith our Saviour Christ, whom the Lord when hee cometh shall finde watchfull: know ye of a truth, he will make him ruler ouer all that he hath.

CHAP. XX.

Of solitariness and Silence.

Seeke a conuenient time to meditate: and oftentimes call the benefits of God into minde.

Omit curious things: and choose such

of the Imitation of Christ.

such matter as may rather stir vp thy minde vnto godlines, then busie thee too much.

Withdraw thy selfe from speaking vainely *a*, from gadding idly, from *a* Math. 12 listening vnto rumours & nouelties; 36, and thou shalt find good leisure, and Phil. 4.8.9 sufficient for thy spirituall exercise, & that after the example of the most godly, who shunned the company of men, as much as they might, & chose to liue apart vnto God.

One said *b*, I neuer came amongst *b* Seneca. men, but I departed more wicked than I was before. And this we finde true when we talke much together.

It is easier to bee altogether silent, then not to exceed in words; and to tarry at home, then not to offend abroad, it is easier.

Wherefore, he which would be zealous and godly, must auoyde company *c*.

c Math. 14

No man safely doth goe abroade, 23. but hee which gladly can abide at Mar. 6.46 home, no man safely doth gouerne but hee which gladly can bee in subiection *d*, no man safely dooth com- *d* Mar. 20 mand, but hee that hath learned willingly to obey *e*, no man safely is *e* Ro. 13.1 merry, but he that hath a good con- Col. 3.20 science *f*.

The first booke

fpro. 15. 13 science f; & no man safely can speak,
but hee that willingly can holde his
peace.

And yet hath not the securitie of
good men, at any time been without.
g Pr. 28. 14 the feare of God g: neither did their
excellent and heauenly gifts, make
them any whit proude, but the more
b Ro. 12. 14 humble h. But the security of the
i pr. 28. 25 wicked, as it ariseth of pride i, so it
k Eia. 48. 12 turneth to their destruction k.

Neuer looke to liue at thine harts
ease in this world, seeme thou neuer
l Eia. 34. 19 so godly and religious l.

It falleth out many times that they
fall grienously through pride, which
in mans opinion were most religious
men m, whereby it is euident, that
n Lu. 18. 10 temptation is verie good for some n:
o ps. 119. 67 both to keepe them from pride o, &
p 2 Cor. 12. 7, outward consolation.

O, if man would auoid vaine plea-
sure, and not loue the world p, what
a good conscience should he alwayes
retaine? If man would cast away all
vaine cares, and thinke onely vpon
heauenlie things, and trust wholly in
q 1 Joh. 2 15. 16. 17 God q, what a continuall ioy should
he feele in his minde?

q ps. 3. 1
Eia. 16. 4

No man shall finde any spirituall
comfort, except hee occupy himselfe
dili-

of the Imitation of Christ.

diligently in stirring vp his minde vnto godlinesse; the which thou shalt Esa. 26.8
the more easily attaine if thou enter
into thy chamber, and shut thy selfe Mat. 6.6
from troubles of the world, as it is
written: Examine your owne heart Psa. 4.4
vpon your bed, and be still.

For commonly thou shalt finde
that in thy closet, which thou wouldest
leese abroad.

The more thou vseth thy Closet,
the more thou wilt like it: the lesse
thou comest thereinto, the more
thou wilt loath it. But frequent the
same rightly, and carrie therein at thy
first conuersion from wickednes, and
afterward thou shalt do it with exceeding
pleasure.

Solitarinesse and quietnes, is good
for him that would proceede in vertue,
and learne the mysteries of holy
Scripture. For there shall he find euen
floods of teares, whereby hee may Psa. 6.6
wash and cleanse himselfe euery night,
that hee may bee so much the nigher
vnto his Maker, by how much hee is
farther from the resort of men.

So that God with his holy Angells
commeth vnto him, which withdraweth
himselfe from his friends and acquaintance.

It

The first booke

It is better to liue in a corner, so a man haue regard to himselfe, then without care of his owne saluation e-

uen to worke miracles &.

It is no shame but praise for a god-ly man seldome to goe abroad y, to shunne to bee seene, and not to loue to see.

Why lookest thou on that, which is not lawfull for thee to haue &? The world passeth away, and the lustes thereof &.

The desire of pleasure maketh thee to roaue abroad; but when the pleasure is past, which is quickly gone, what gettest thou thereby but repentance, and a wandring soule?

A merry out-going, bringeth commonly a mournfull returning home, & a merry euening watch, is signe of a lowring morning; euen so the ioy of this world entreth pleasantly, but endeth bitterly b. What canst thou see in another place, which is not heere? Behold the heauen and the earth, and all the elements, for of those doe all things consist: What seest thou in any place that abideth euer?

Perchance thou thinkest to satisfie thy selfe with contemplation, but thou shalt neuer doe so.

What

of the Imitation of Christ.

What if thou sawest euen all things
before thine eyes? it were but a vain
sight *d.*

d Ec. 1. 14

But lift vp thine eyes man vnto *e* *Pla. 25. 1*
God *e*, and aske pardon for thine of- *Pla. 121. 1*
fences. *f Si. 17. 23*

f Si. 17. 23

Leaue vaine things to vaine folkes, *g Deu. 11*
and giue thou thy mind to do the wil *i*
of God *g.* *Eccl. 3. 12*

Eccl. 3. 12

Shut thy self within thy doore *h, h Mat. 6. 5*
and call thy wel-beloued Iesus vnto *i Can. 8*
thee *i*. Tarry with him in thy cham- *14. & 3. 4*
ber, for else where thou shalt neuer
finde so great quietnes.

Haddest thou not gone abroade,
nor listened vnto rumours and tales,
thou mightest the better haue enioy-
ed quietnes: but now, because thou
giuest thine eares to heare newes thou
art troubled greatly, and vexed in
minde.

CHAP. XXI.

Preparatiues vnto godlinesse.

VWilt thou come forward in
godliness? Then fear God *a, a Pro. 1. 7*
and bee thou not ouer-loose in be- *Pla. 19. 19*
hauour, nor giuen to any vaine *Sirac. 1. 16*
pleasure *b*, but keepe vnder thy senses *b Pro. 9. 17*
by

The first booke

by discipline.

Prepare thy selfe to vnfained re-
 e Ro. 2. 12 pentance e, and thou wilt proue reli-
 gious. For repentance bringeth vnto
 godlinesse, and negligence quickly
 doth forgoe the same.

It is maruaile that any man can
 hartily reioyce in this life, which con-
 sidereth his banishment, and the ma-
 nifold perils of his soule d.
 d 1 pet. 1. 6

Through the weaknes of our minde
 & security, wee feele not the sorrowes
 of the mind, but oftentimes we laugh
 when indeed we should weep e
 e Mat. 5. 4

Luk. 6. 21 There is no true liberty, nor good
 mirth, but in the feare of god ioyned
 with a good conscience f.
 f 2 Cor.

Happy is that man, which casting
 off the lets of all worldly busines, can
 giue himselfe wholly to the stirring
 vp of his minde. Happy is he that can
 keepe himselfe from all those things,
 which may either defile or burthen
 his conscience g.
 g 2 cor. 8. 9

6 2 Ti. 2. 1 Fight like a man h, custom is over-
 come by custome,

If thou mindest not to meddle in
 other mens matters, they for their
 parts, will not meddle in thine.

Take not vpon thee another mans
 charge, neither trouble thy selfe in the
 affaires

affaires of thy betters.

But looke vpon thy selfe, and be-^s Mat. 7.1
fore thy dearest friends giue thy selfe
counsell.

If thou lack the good will of men,
take it not heauily, but if thou behaue
not thy selfe well, and circumspectly
as becommeth the seruant of G O D
and a true Christian k, howle and k Luk. 8.11
weepe l. Ro. 2.8.9

It is good for a man not to haue l lam. 5.1
much comfort in this life, especially
worldly comfort. As touching hea-
uently, if wee either feele it not at all,
or but seldome, the fault is in our
selues, which neither seek occasions
to stir vp the mind, nor forsake tran-
sitory. and externall comfort m. m 2 co. 1.9

Thinke with thy selfe not onelie Heb. 12.1
that thou hast not deserued any hea-
uently cōfort, but also that thou doost
deserue great misery & affliction n. n Lu. 18.13

A man set on fire with the sparkes o illo. 2.14.
of true godlinesse, loueth not o, but p Phil. 3.8
loatheth the world p; and all that is q 1 Ioh. 2.
therein q. 16.

A good man continually findeth
occasion to weepe and mourne, For
whether he behold himselfe, or other
men, hee seeth that no man liueth
without misery in this world. Yea the
more

The first booke

more earnestly hee considereth himselfe, the more abundantly doth he
 ¶ Lu. 23. 28 shed teares. And indeed our manifold finnes and transgressions / wherewith wee lie so wrapped, that hardly we can behold celestiall things, shold prouoke vs so to doe.

¶ Sir. 7. 36. Thinke more often of thy death, than of a long life, & doubtless thou wilt giue thy selfe more earnestly to repentance, then thou doest. Againe, call into thy mind the paines of hell, when God shall turne away his face, ¶ Si. 18. 23 and it will make thee both to lament thy finnes, and to take aduersitie in good part.

But because these things come not
 ¶ Pro. 14. 9 into mind, and we follow the vaine pleasures of this transitory world, we goe on, God knowes, coldly and
 ¶ Gal. 5. 18 slowlie in religion, for lack of the
 Rom. 8. 12 Spirit of God: whence it is that our wretched bodies doe so earnestlie complaine.

Wherefore make thy humble petition vnto Almighty God, that hee would inflame within thy breast his heauenly fire, and say with that
 ¶ Psal. 52. 9 Prophet, Feed me, O Lord, with the
 ¶ Psal. 80. 5 bread of teares, and giue mee teares
 Psal. 102. 9 to drinke in great measure.

CHAP. XXII.

*A view of the misery of
mankind.*

WHeresoever thou art, & whithersoever thou turnest thy selfe, thou art miserable, vnlesse thou returne vnto God *a*. Why art thou troubled because things fall not out according to thy minde? But who is he that hath all things at his harts desire? Not I, not thou, nor any mortall man; no doubtles, man is not without misery and trouble; no not a King, nor the proude Pope himselfe.

Who is then in the best estate & condition? Euen he which for Gods cause can suffer affliction *b*.

b Mat. 5. 10

Weake & foolish people say commonly? See how happy hee is, how wealthy, how mighty, in what authoritie, of what goodly stature, how faire he is. But looke vpon heavenly gifts, and thou shalt finde that these things are not to be accounted of *c*. For they are vncertain, and burdensom *d*, because they can neuer be kept without carefulnesse and feare *e*.

c 1 pet. 3. 14*d* Mat. 6. 10*e* 1 Iob. 2. 16*f* Mat. 4. 19*g* Lu. 12. 33

Man should not thinke that in
abun-

abundance of these worldly things
f 1 Tim. 6. an happy life doth consist f, but hee is
17. 18. 19 to content himselfe wi h a meane e-
Luk. 12. 21 state g, and to thinke that as long as
g ps. 77. 16 hee liueth in this world hee is misera-
ble.

The more a man hungereth after
godlines, the more he abhorreth this
b 1 cor. 12 life h, because hee perceiueth more
10. sensibly, and more evidently seeth
the sinnes of mans corruption. For
vndoubtedly, to a man zealously ad-
dicted, & desirous to be loosed from
i Ro. 7. 24 sin i, to be with Christ k, it is a mise-
k phi. 1. 23 rie and trouble euen to eat, to drink,
to sleepe, to rest, to labour, and to bee
subiect to other things necessarily in-
cident vnto mortall man. For these
things do greatly suppress the mind
e Wil. 9. 15 of man l. Therefore most humbly
doth the Prophet desire to bee deliue-
red from them on this wise. Drawe
mee out of my necessities, o Lord.

But miserable are they, which see
not their owne misery, but more mi-
se Lu. 6. 24 serable which loue this miserie m and
mortall life, in which some so delight
(albeit with all their carking and
care, they can hardly prouide things
necessary for themselves) that were
they sure to liue alwayes in this
world.

of the Imitation of Christ.

world, they would not set a point by the kingdome of God *n*. Which made *n* Mat. 6. 21 and faithlesse wretches, so deeply Luk. 12. 16 drowned in the earth, that they can think *vpō* nothing but earthly things, *ū*al one day to their pain vnderstand, how vile and vaine it was which they leued *o*.

• Phi. 3. 19

But those men of God, and friends of Christ, looked not on those things which pleased the flesh, & flourish for a time *p*, but they coueted after euerglasting riches with all desire & greedinesse, yea with their whole hearts, they longed for things on high, not scene *q*, that the desire of things *q* 1 Cor. 4. which are seen, might not draw them 18 *vp* to things below.

Despaire not brother to come forward in godlinesse, thou hast yet time and space *r*. Deferre not therefore *r* Pl. 32. 56 thine amendment *s* from day to day, Elz. 55. 6. 7 but rise, and out of hand begin, and *s* Ec. 12. 1. reason with thy selfe in this wise. Be- 2 cor. 6. 1. 2 hold now is the time to worke, now to win the field, now is the time to attend *t*, in aduersity the time is to de- 1 Ga. 6. 7. 10 lieue well.

Through fire and water thou must passe, before thou canst come to the place of comfort *u*. Except thou offer *u* Pl. 66. 12
E. 2. violence.

The first booke

x Mat. 11
13 violence vnto thy selfe &, thou shalt
neuer triumph ouer sinne.

As long as wee beare about fraile
and earthly bodies, let vs not look to
liue without griefe and sorrow y.

y Ro. 7. 42 Indeed we could wish to liue quiet
frō misery: but for so much as through
sinne wee haue lost our innocency &
2 Ro. 5. 15 our felicity & quietnes is gone there-
withall.

e Luk. 12
19 Wherefore let vs bee patient &, and
expect the mercy of God vntill our
wickednes be put away, and this mor-
talitie be swallowed vp of life b.

b 1 Cor.
15. 54 O Lord, how great is mans frailty !
How is man prone continually vnto
sinne c ! To day thou doost confesse
thy sinne d, and to morrow thou wilt
sinne afresh as earst thou didst. Now
thou art purposed to offend no more,
and yet by and by thou dost so wic-
kedly, as if thou hadst neuer meant to
doe well e.

e Ro. 7. 15 So that great cause we haue to de-
base, and to thinke humbly of our
selues, beeing so fraile and subiect to
offending f.

f 1 am. 3. 2
and 4. 1 Again, if with little negligence we
leeze that which by great labor could
hardly bee obtained ; what will be-
come of vs at the end, which so soone
were

were cold g?

g Lu. 9. 60

Woe be to vs, if we goe on to rest,
as if now there were peace and secu-
ritie *b*, when as in very deede as yet *b* 1 Thes.
there appeareth no token of godline is 5.6
in our behauour.

Then vndoubtedly we must be trai-
ned vp afresh like young souldiers *i*, *i* 2. Ti. 2. 1
if wee hope to returne vnto goodnes,
and to proceed in godlinesse.

CHAP. XXIII.

*That man ought to thinke vpon
his end.*

Seeing the life of man is so fraile
and short *a*, consider wisely what *a* Iob. 14. 1
thou takest in hand.

To day a man, to morrow none *b*: *b* Si. 10. 11
and being out of sight, thou art out
of mind *c*.

Oh the dulnesse, and hardnesse of
mans heart, that thinking of things
present, hath no care of the time to
come *d*.

It were thy part so to behaue thy
selfe in all thy deeds and thoughts, as
though thou shouldest depart out of
this world by and by.

Hadst thou a cleare cōscience, thou
wouldest not greatly feare death.

The first booke

It is better to auoide sinne, than to
sle death.

If thou art not ready to day, how
wilt thou be to morrowe? The next
day is not certaine. And againe how
knowest thou that thou shalt liue till
to morrow?

f Mat. 24

36

Mar. 13. 32

What are wee the better to liue
long, if wee proue not bettes by our
long life? Assuredly long life dooth
not make vs better to Godward, but
the farther from God.

g Ro. 2. 4

Iam. 5. 1

Oh well were we, if wee had liued
well but one day in the world! Many
keep in mind how long they haue fa-
uoured good religion, but they neuer
thinke what fruit they haue shewed
worthy amendment of life.

b Mat. 3. 8

If thou thinke it irkesome to die,
thou shalt finde it more perillous and
dangerous to liue long.

11 Cor. 4

16

Happy is that man which alwaies
thinketh of his end, and prepareth
himselſe daily for to die.

k He. 9. 27

Sir. 41. 3

When thou seest a man to die, con-
sider by & by that thou must depart
the same way.

In the morning thinke not to liue
till night, & at night looke not to liue
till morning; and alwaies liue so cir-
cumſpectly, and be so godly prepa-
red,

red that death may finde thee readie
whensoever he shall come.

Many before they looke for death,
depart suddenly *l* : for the sonne of *l* Luke 12.
man will come in an houre when *l* o
men looke not for him *m*. But when *m* Luk. 12.
that houre shal come, then wilt thou *40*.
begin to thinke otherwise of thy life *Mat. 24. 50*
past then thou hast done, and then
wilt thou bitterly bewaile, that euer
thou wast so sluggish & negligent *n*. *n* Mat. 7.

Happy is that man which inde- *22*.
uoureth to seeme such in this life, as
hee would appeare at the houre of
death *o*. *o* Luk. 12

Hee which hateth the world per- *23*.
fectly *p*, and fauoureth godlines zeal- *p* 1 Ioh. 10
lously *q*, and wil bee admonished wil- *15*.
lingly *r*, and endeuoureth to amend *q* Re. 3. 15
his life seriously *s*, and can obey his *r* Pro. 2. 41
superiours gladly *t*, and deny himselfe *s* Luk. 3. 3
thoroughly *u*, and take affliction for *t* Tit. 3. 1
Christs sake patiently *x*, giueth most *Col. 3. 22*
notable tokens that he will die a good *u* Mar. 8. 24
man. *Luk. 9. 23*.

Whilst thou art in health, thou *x* Mat. 10.
mayest doe many good deeds : but *38. 5. 10*
when thou art sicke, I see not what *1* Pet. 3. 14
thou art able to do. For in the time of
sicknesse we amend : and they which
defer their amendment till then, doe

The first booke

hardly come into the fauour of God.

Better is it to amende, and while
y Ge. 6. 10 time is y to liue well, that heereafter
2 Re. 7. 15 thou maist liue for euer 2. But if thou
forgo so good opportunity, thou af-
terwards wilt seeke it, when it is too
late: and perhaps desire but an houre
or two to repent, and they will not bee
granted.

Wherefore consider diligently both
what perills thou shalt escape, and
a pr. 14. 27 what miseries auoyd a, if alwaies like
a Wiseman, thou thinke vpon thine
end. And indeauour so to liue in this
World, that at the houre of death,
b pla. 23. 4 thou maist reioyce rather then fear b.

Now while time is, learne to die
vnto the world, that then thou maist
c Ro. 16. 8. liue with Christ c. Now, while time
d 1 Ioh. 2 is, learne to contemne the world d,
15. that then without let thou maist goe
vnto Christ. Now, while time is
e 1 Cor. 9. beate e down thy body by repentance,
27. that then thou maist haue an assured
boldnesse.

Ah foole, what thinkest thou to
f Luk. 12 liue long, seeing thou art not sure to
17. liue one day? How many haue beene
g Ecc. 9. 12 deceiued, and suddenly taken out of
this world g!

Thou hast heard I am sure, & that
of.

of the Imitation of Christ.

oftentimes, how one was killed by the sword, another drowned, another brake his neck with a fall, another as he was at meat, another at play, another with a knife, another of the sicknes, another of thieues. Thus all die *h* (though not after one sort) and *h* Sir. 41.3 mans life passeth away like a shadow, *i* Job. 8.9

Who after death will helpe thee, if in thy life time thou lose good oportunitie *k*: Now, I say, now or neuer is the time to doe well *l*, while *l* 2 Cor. 2 both thou knowest not the houre of *6*. thy death, and maist doe good to thy selfe in time.

Now while time serues, lay vp euerlasting treasures for thy selfe in heaven *m*, thinke of nothing but on *m* Mat. 6 heauenly things *n*, and care for no- 20. thing but thy saluation. Now, I say, *n* Col. 3.12 while time serues, make friends, which after death may receiue thee into euerlasting habitations *o*. *o* Lu. 16.2

Account thy selfe on the earth but *p* Heb. 11 a pilgrim and stranger *p*, vnto whom 13. the affaires of the world doe nothing appertaine. Get thee a quiet conscience, & lift vp thy mind vnto God *q*, *q* Col. 2.1 because in this world thou hast no *r* He. 13.14 continuing Citie *r*. Mich. 2.10

Thither direct thy prayers, and
E 5 daily

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daily grones with teares, that after
death thy spirit may goe to G O D. in

sp̄sal. 31. 5. blisse.

Lu. 23. 46.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the last Iudgement, and of the
punishment for sinne.

a Sir. 7. 36.

WHatsoener thou takest in
hand, remember thine end *a*,
and how thou must appeare
before a seuerer Iudge, in whose sight
b He. 4. 13 nothing is hidde *b*, which neither is
pleased by reward, nor admitteth
vaine excuses, but rightly and indiffe-
c Pet. 1. 17. rently iudgeth all men *c*.

d Iob. 9. 3

O fond man and miserable wretch,
what answer wilt thou make vnto
God, who knoweth all thy sinnes *d*,
which oftentimes fearest euen the
lookes of an angry man?

Why dost thou not looke to thy
selfe against the day of that iudge-
ment, when no man shall excuse, or
e Ro. 14. 12 defend another *e*? for euery man shall
2 cor. 5. 10 haue enough to answer for himselfe *f*.
sp̄l. 62. 12. Now maiest thou do good, if thou
Rom. 2. 6. take paine, now will thy teares be ac-
cepted, if thou weepe: now may thy
grones bee heard if thou sigh *g*, and
both pacifie God, and purge thy selfe.

And

of the Imitation of Christ.

And indeed thoroughly is the patient man purged, which beeing injured, dooth bewaile the wickednesse of the inferrer, rather than the injury offered vnto himselfe, prayeth for his enemies *h*, forgiueth them from *h* Mat. 5. 44 his heart, asketh pardon speedily of *i* Mat. 6. 12 others whom he hath offended *k*, is *k* Mat. 5. 24 more easily moued to pittie, than to anger, offereth often violence vnto himselfe *l*, and laboureth earnestly to *l* Mat. 11 bring his body into the subiection of *2* the spirit *m*. And these things must *m* 1 Cor. not bee deferred, but be done while *9. 27* we liue, and that with speed *n*. But we *n* Gal. 6. 10 deceiue our selues through an inordinate desire of the flesh *o*. *o* Ro. 8. 12

That hell fire *p*, what else will it *p* Mat. 25 burne but sinners? The more thou *41*. hast loued thy selfe, and pampered thy flesh, the more shalbe thy paines, & the more substance to burne thee hast thou laid together *q*. For in what *q* Lu. 12. 20 things a man hath sinned, in the same *and 16. 12* he shall be punished, according to the greatnes of the offence *r*. *r* Wis 11

There idle persons shall be pricked *13*. with burning forkes, gluttons there shalbe tormented with extreame hunger and thirst *s*, there Epicures and *s* Lu. 16. 24. voluptuous persons, for their sweete delights

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delights shall haue burning pitch to boyle them, & stinking brimstone to annoy them; the enuious there shall howle like mad doggs, & no vice but shall haue his torment. There the proud shall haue shame, and the couetous Churle shall haue miserable penurie.

To be short, one houre of paine in that place, shall bee more greuous, then all the time they had in this world to amend their manners. For there is no rest, comfort there is none; heere sometimes their sorrow ceased, and sometime they receiued comfort of their friends.

Wherefore haue a care of thy selfe whilest thou art aliue, & bewaile thy sinnes, that in the day of that iudgement, thou maiest safely reioyce with

1. Lu. 16. 25. Gods elect.

Wil. 2. 3.

2. Wil. 5. 9

Pla. 1. 3

3. Mat. 19.

28

4. Mat. 5. 3

5. Lu. 14. 11

6. pr. 16. 18

7. 1 Cor.

4. 10.

For then shall the righteous with great boldnesse, stand against such as haue vexed and oppressed them. Then shall he sit to iudge, which now is content to be iudged of men. Then shall the poore, and meeke triumph, when the proud shall quake on euery side. Then shall they say, Hee was wise, which for Christ his sake seemed a foole & abie. Then shall

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shall the memorie of miserie patiently
sustained bee sweete *d*, when in the *d* Ps. 126. 5
meane while the wicked shall sob and *Esa. 25. 8*
fighe. Then shall the godly reioyce *e* *Re. 21. 8*
and be glad, but the reprobate shall
howle and weep *f*. Then shall the af- *f* *Mat. 25*
flicted more triumph, then if conti- 46
nually he had bin in ioy *g*. Then shall *g* *Ro. 8. 18*
the base apparell be glorious *h*, & the *h* *2 cor. 5. 2*
proude attire infamous. Then shall
the poore cottage be more commen-
ded *i*, then is the gilded Palace prai- *i* *2 pe. 1. 13*
sed. Then shall constant patience
more preuaile *k*, than all the power of *k* *Esa. 50. 18*
the world. Simple obedience shall
more bee commended then, than all
the subtiltie of man *l*. Then shall a *l* *Esa. 29. 16*
cleere and good conscience more re-
ioyce a man *m*, than profound skill in *m* *Esa. 33*
philosophy. The contempt of riches 14
shal do more good then *n*, than al the *n* *Mat. 5. 3*
riches in the world. Then shall a zea-
lous prayer bring more delight *o*, *o* *Si. 35. 13*
than euer did fine eates. Thy silence
kept in thy life time shall more cheere
thy hart in that time *p*, than long bab- *p* *psa. 30. 15*
bling *q*. Good workes then shall be *q* *Mat. 6. 4*
more respected *r*, than copy of sweet *r* *Ro. 2. 10*
words. And then shall thy paines ta-
ken to reforme thy manners, more
delight *s*, than could all the pleasure *s* *Pro. 11. 3*

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1 Wil. 5. 8 in the world.

Wherefore learne in this life to
 2 Ro. 8. 18 suffer small things, that in the world
 to come thou maiest escape great and
 grievous dangers. Try first in thy
 life-time what thou canst suffer after
 thou art dead. And if thou canst not
 endure but light things in compari-
 son now, how wilt thou beare after-
 ward euerlasting torments? And if
 now so little paine can make thee im-
 patient, what will the fire of hell doe?
 For perswade thy selfe thou canst not
 be twise happy, that is, to enioy thy
 3 Lu. 16. 25 pleasure in this life, and raigne too
 with Christ in the worlde to come.
 Now suppose thou hadst liued hither-
 to in perpetuall honour and pleasure,
 what good would these things doe
 thee, if thou shouldest die out of
 4 Lu. 9. 25 hand?

Seest thou not how all things are
 5 Ec. 1. 2 vaine, saue onely to loue & to serue
 6 1 Pet. 1 God?

10 For hee which loueth God with all
 his heart, feareth neither death, nor
 paine, nor iudgement, nor damnati-
 on. 6. For perfect loue maketh a
 7 1 Io. 4. 17 man with boldness to appeare before
 8 Rom. 6. God. But maruaile it is not, though
 he which delighteth as yet in sinne d,

doe.

of the Imitation of Chriſt.

doe both feare death, and the day of Iudgement.

Notwithſtanding, if the loue of God cannot allure thee vnto godlineſſe, yet let the feare of hell fire drue thee from wickedneſſe. But if neither *1. Cor. 14. 17* the loue of God, nor the feare of hell *Luk. 3. 7* can better thee one iot, then looke not to ſtand in a good thing long, but quickly to fall into the ſnares of Satan.

CHAP. XXV.

That we muſt earneſtly endeavour to amend our liues.

BE thou zealous and earneſt in the ſeruiſe of God, conſider with thy ſelfe, wherefore thou waſt made, and wherefore thou haſt re-nounced the world: euen to liue to GOD *a* and to become a good *a Ro. 7. 4* man *b*. *b Eph. 2. 10*

Therefore endeavour thou zealouſly to goe forward. For yet a little while and thou ſhalt haue a reward of thy labours, and neither feare nor ſorrow ſhall be about thee. *c Eſa. 25. 8*

Labour but a while longer, & thou *Reu. 7. 17* ſhalt find great, yea euerlaſting reſt *d. d Ro. 8. 18*.
If.

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If thou continue faithfull and diligent vnto the end e. God will shewe himselfe faithfull, and bountifull in rewarding f.
e Mat. 24 13.
2 Tim. 2.5

Hope well to winne the garland g, but shunne securitie h, both to auoid weariness and pride.
f Mat. 25.1
g Ro. 8. 24
h Mat. 24

A certaine man tossed betweene hope and feare, on a day in his prayer vttered these words, Oh if I knew certainly that I should perseuer; and forthwith hee seemed to heare these heauenly words in his minde: What if thou knewest as much, wouldest thou continue in the course thou hast taken? well go to do that which thou wouldest do, & doubt not to perseuer. With which comfortable words being encouraged, he straight way committed himselfe to the will of God, & from thenceforth neither wauered any more in mind, nor laboured curiously what might become of him, but bent himselfe wholly to doe that was agreeable to the will of God, & most necessary for his going forward, and continuing in the race of vertue.
42.
Lu. 12.42.
Job. 1. 17

Trust thou in the Lord, and doe good (saith the Prophet k) so thou shalt dwell in the land and be fed assuredly.
k psal. 37.3

of the Imitation of Christ.

One thing there is that withdraweth many men from proceeding in vertue, and earnest amendment of their manners: and that is the horrible hardnes, and the painfulnesse to subdue our selues.

But who profit more then others in well doing? Not they whom such things dismay, but they which endeavour valiantlie to overcome those counterbufs. For the more a man overcometh, & by Gods assistance subdueth himselfe, the more he goeth forward, and cometh the more into the fauour of God.

1 Mat 19

21.

Mar. 20. 21

m p/2. 27

14.

n Pet. 2. 9

Howbeit, all men have not like power to overcome, and to mortifie themselves. Yet this I say, hee which hath lesse abilitie, if hee vse diligence in this point, shall more preuaile, than another which is slothfull, though perhaps otherwise hee seeme vertuous.

o Mat. 19

28.

Luk. 18. 13

p Mat. 19

10.

Lu. 18. 11

Now there be two things, that make much to a mans amendment, namely, to withdrawe our selues violently from such things, whereunto by our wicked nature we are inclined; and to bend our selues wholly to the attaining of that good, which wee stand in neede of. Also those things

7 Mat. 11

12.

r Psa. 37

34.

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things are especially to bee taken heed of and auoided, which wee commonly mislike, or condemne in other mens.

1 Mat. 7. 3.

Rom. 2. 1

Take profit of euery thing. If thou hearest, or seest examples of vertue, follow them; if of wickednes, auoid them. As thou priest into other mens manners, so do others, into thine.

1 Ma. 7. 2-4

Oh what a ioyfull and comfortable thing it is, to see professours of Christianitie, followers of Christs doctrine:

1 Cor. 13

3.

1 Tim. 1. 5

Againe what a lamentable, and grieuous thing is it, that such as would be counted Gospellers, liue loosely, and contrarie to their calling?

How hurtfull is it towards the purpose of thy profession, to encline to those things which are not commended thee?

1 Tim. 4

1. 8, 5. 13

Col. 2. 20

Gal. 6. 14

Remember thy profession, and alwaies haue in mind Christ which was crucified; when thou seest his life, bee ashamed of thy selfe, that hast so long awhile professed Christianitie, and yet so little, if any whit followed the example of Christ.

1 Cor. 11

1.

1 Pet. 2. 9

Hee which attentively, and carefully thinketh vpon the life and death of Iesus, shall finde sufficiency of all necessary

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necessarie, and profitable things in the same; neither shall hee neede to seeke any better thing without Iesus.

Rom. 8.1

Col. 2.12

If Iesus crucified came into our mindes, quickly and sufficiently learned we should proue.

1 cor. 1.1

The delight of a Christian is in the Law of the Lord, and therein doth he exercise himselfe: but if hee once waxe negligent, and luke-warme then miseries come which oppresse him, and troubles that vex him, because hee is void of inward consolation, and forbidden to seeke any outward comfort.

Psa. 1.2

Re. 3.15

Esa. 57.3

And doubtlesse, hee which passeth the bounds of Christs doctrine, is greatly subiect to a grievous destruction, and hee that loueth a loose & secure life, is neuer in quiet for some thing euer-more displeaseth him.

Pro. 1.24

Eze. 57

20

Rather follow the straight & vertuous life of the Apostles and Disciples of Christ; and in so dooing, doubt thou not, but that God of his wonted mercy will giue thee strength to doe well. This is the way to be full of hope and strength, this is the way euen the heavenly way so to proceed,

Mat. 7.13

1 co. 11.1

Heb. 13.7

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cede, that thou maiest despise all
kpsa. 56.4 worldly things k.

18. 111. 2 And would to God wee had no let
but that wee might praise God euen

lps. 34. 1. 2 with heart and mouth l, and keep his

mpl. 119. 5 commandements m. Would to God

wee were quite ridde from all worldly
businesse, and set our affections on

n Col. 3. 2 heavenly things n. For when man is
come to that point, that he careth for

apl. 86. 7. 8 no worldly comfort o, then begin-

and. 10. 7 neth he to taste the sweetnes of God;

to take all things in good part, how-

soeuer they fall out; to be neither o-

uer iocund in prosperity, nor too pen-

sive in aduersitie p; but euermore

qpsa. 37. 3 confidently to hope in God q, who is

r Ro. 11. 36 all in all r, to whom nothing dyeth,

1 cor. 8. 6 but all things liue, and continually o-

spl. 104. 1 bey at his beck s.

t Sira. 7. 36 Alwaies remember the end t, and

think that time lost will neuer come

u Eph. 5. 15 againe u.

Without care and diligence, thou

x Ro. 12. 6 shalt neuer attaine to godlinesse x. If

y 2 co. 11. 2 thou wexe faint, thou shalt euerie

z Lpk. 9. 62 day be worse & worse y; but go thou

Mat. 25 zealously forward z, and thou shalt

finde both great peace and pleasure in

thy wel doing, both because God fa-

uoreth thee, & thou fauourest vertue.

Chap. 29. 69 No ioy to a good conscience
of the Imitation of Christ.

An earnest and zealous man is prepared vnto all things a. It is more painefull to resist vices and perturbations of the minde, than to sweat againe with bodily labour: and hee which in time taketh no heed of smal sinnes, by little and little falleth into great offences b.

a Ro. 8. 35
Eph. 6. 12
b Iam. 1. 13

Thou shalt euermore be merry at night, if thou hast behaued thy selfe godly in the day.

Watch ouer thy selfe c stir vp, and admonish thy selfe; whatsoeuer becommeth of others, haue a regard to thy selfe d; For so doost thou profit, as thou offecest e violence vnto thy selfe.

c 1 Cor. 16. 13
d 1 Tim. 6. 11. 12
e Mat. 11. 12

*Thus endeth the first
Booke.*

The second Booke of the IMITATION of CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

Of the inward life of man.

• Lu. 17. 21



THE Kingdome of
God is within, saith
Christ.

Turne thee vnto
the Lord with all
thine heart, hauing
forlaken this wretched world, & thou

• Psa. 4. 8

shalt finde rest for thy soule.

Mat. 11. 29

Learne to contemn outward things

• Lu. 17. 10

e, and to addict thy selfe to spirituall;
in shalt thou perceiue the kingdome
of God to come vnto thee.

• Ro. 14. 17

For the kingdome of God is right-
eousnesse and peace, and ioy in the
holy Ghost, which the wicked en-
ioy not.

• Esa. 57

21

• Ioh. 14. 23

Christ will come vnto thee & com-
fort thee, if thou make a firme resting
place for him within thee. For all his
glory and beauty is within, there
doth he gladly abide.

• ps. 45. 13

With the inner man doth hee of-
tentimes

of the Imitation of Christ.

tentimes walke, and reason sweetlie,
and delight himseife pleasantly, and
agree notably, and familiarly conti-
nue h.

hpro. 8. 31

Goe to now, o faithfull soule, pre-
pare thine hart for this bridegroom,
that he may come vnto thee, & dwell
within thee. For thus he saith k: If any
man loue me, he will keep my word,
and my father will loue him, and wee
will come vnto him, and will dwell
with him.

i Can. 5. 4.

k Io. 14. 30

Wherefore keepe out others, and
let Christ haue room: if thou hast
him, thou hast enough l. For he will
haue a care of thee, and so faithfully
ouer-see all thine affaires, that to put
any confidence in man, thou shalt
not need m.

m Ps. 37. 7

For men quickly are changed, and
speedily depart n, but Christ abideth
for euer, and continueth by his vn-
to the end p. Neither sette any great
affiance on mortall and fraile man,
albeit he bee decre vnto thee, and may
do thee good q, and if sometime he
gaine-say and trouble thee, bee not
ouer pensive.

n Heb. 13. 8

p ps. 92. 9

q He. 13. 6

r Ma. 2. 20

s ps. 118. 8

They which take thy part to day,
to morrow may be thine enemies, &
afterward thy friends, for they change
many,

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many times like the wind.

But put thy confidence in the Lord
 1 pet. 5. 7 *r*, and see thou serue & loue him *s*, he
 Mat. 21. will handle thy cause right well, and
 37. set it in good order *s*.

Here thou hast no continuing Ci-
 epla. 73. 23 tie *w*: & wherefoeuer thou goest, thou
 He. 11. 14 art a stranger and a pilgrim *x*, neuer
 He. 11. finding rest, till thou art fast ioyned
 13. vnto Christ *y*.
 Eph. 2. 19

Why doost thou here gaze about,
 seeing this is not the place of thine
 abode? In heauen should be thy co-
 uersatiō *z*: as for earthly things thou
 shouldst beholde them onely to see
 1 Cor. 7. how they passe away *a* and thou with
 31. them *b*. So looke vpon them, that
 bpsa. 90. 5 thou loue them not *c*, least thou pe-
 1 Ioh. 3 rish beeing taken with vaine delight.
 15. Cast thy cogitations vpon the most
 1 Pe. 5. 7 hie God *d*, and pray vnto Christ with-
 epl. 55. 16. out ceasing *e*.

If thou canst not meditate on deep
 and heauenly mysteries, rest thy selfe
 in the paines of Christ, & abide wil-
 lingly in his wounds *f*. Run thou zea-
 1 Pe. 2. 11 lously vnto those heauenly woundes
 and 4. 13 and stripes of Christ, and thou shalt
 find a great comfort in aduersity, yea
 thou shalt not set a rush by the repro-
 ches of men, but take all flanders in
 good

good part g.

Christ himselfe was despised of ^{g 1 pet. 3} 19. & 3. 9
men in this world *h*; yea at a great *h* ^{1 pl. 2. 6}
extremity his very friends forlooke
him and fled *i*. Christ himselfe luste, ^{i Mat. 6. 56}
red, and was condemned *k*, and wilt ^{k Ef. 5. 3}
thou complain? Christ himselfe had
aduersaries & back-biters *l*, & woul- ^{l 2 pe. 2. 3}
dest thou haue no enemies, nor be ill
spoken of?

How shall thy patience be crowned
if thou sustaine no aduersity *m*? And ^{m 2 Ti. 1. 3}
if thou wilt not bee contraried in any ^{n Io. 15. 13}
thing, how wilt thou be the friend of ^{o Ro. 8. 17}
Christ *n*? But make thou an account ^{p 1 pe. 4. 14}
to suffer tribulation both with Christ ^{q 2 Tim. 2}
o, and for Christ *p*, if thou desire to ^{r 1. 12}
raigne with Christ *q*.

Oh haddest thou but once entred
into the secret closet of Iesus, & felt
but euen a verie little of the heat of
his loue, thou wouldest not onely
make no account either of prosperity
or aduersitie in this world *r*, but also ^{r Luk. 5. 11}
euen reioyce when thou art defamed ^{s & 9. 13}
s; for the loue of Christ makes a man ^{t Act. 5. 41}
euen to despise himselfe *t*. ^{u Ro. 8. 35}

I say, the true spirituall man, which
is voyd of inordinate desires and lo-
ueth Iesus vnfainedly, canne both
turne himselfe freely vnto God, and

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raunished in spirit about himselfe, quietly enjoy him.

Phil. 3. 20

Hee to whom all things seeme as they are indeed, not as they are esteemed in the yaine opinion of man, is doubtlesse a Wise man, and rather taught of God, than of men.

Exa. 54

43.

Hee that hath learned to abide within, and to make small account of outward things; neyther seeketh a place, nor expecteth leasure to exercise himselfe in godlines. The inward man can quickly call himselfe home, inasmuch as hee neuer is altogether abroad. Neither outward labour can let him, nor necessary busines stay him for a time: but as euery thing falleth out, so doth hee apply himselfe.

Ro. 8. 38

He that is well prepared, and reformed inwardly, is nothing troubled with the wonderfull & peruerse behaviour of the world: looke how greatly a man draweth businesse vnto himselfe, so much is hee hindered and distracted.

Psa. 56. 5

1 cor. 4. 3

Wert thou well settled, & thoroughly purged, all things would be for thy good and profit. But for that thou art not plainly dead vnto thy selfe, or separated wholly from earthlie things.

Ro. 8. 28

1 Pe. 2. 1

Colo. 3. 5

of the imitation of Christ.

things, many things displease, and trouble thee oftentimes.

Nothing so doth defile and snarle the minde of man, as the impure desire of earthly things.

e Tit. 2. 12

Wherefore if thou wilt despise the consolation which this world doth minister, thou shalt more easily both behold celestiall things, and inwardly reioyce.

f 1 Jo. 2. 15

CHAP. II.

*Of patience and humility, two vertues
necessarie to bee in a Christian.*

CAre not greatly who is on thy side, or against thee, but care to please God in all thy doing, and to haue a good conscience, so will God defend thee mightwell. And whom he defendeth, none can hurt.

4 Ps. 36. 4

2 Co. 8. 12

b Ro. 8. 13

If thou hast learned to holde thy peace, & to be patient, doubt thou not but God will aide thee from above. Hee knoweth when to deliuer thee, therefore oughtest thou to commit thy selfe to his pleasure.

e Pl. 27. 14

d 1 Pet. 2. 9

It is God that aydeth, and deliuereth man from shame and rebuke.

e ps. 121. 2

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It is many times good to bring vs more and more downe, to haue our vices knowen and reprehended of others.

f p̄sa. 119

67

When a man humbleth himselfe for his offences, hee easily pacifieth such as are offended, and with small adoe commeth into fauour againe.

g p̄s. 34. 18

h lam. 4. 6

i pc. 5. 9

Pro. 22. 4

h Lu. 10. 21

IEsa. 66. 2

The humble man doth God protect and saue: to the humble, hee humbleth himselfe; yea the humble hath many things at his hands, the humble he exalteth vnto glorie, and to the humble hee both reuealeth his secrets, & offereth himselfe. The humble man, hee hee neuer so much iniured, or backbited, is alwaies quiet in mind, because hee trusteth in God, not in the world.

m p̄sa. 23. 4

n lam. 4. 6

Think not to come forward in religion any whir, vlesse thou thinke thy selfe inferiour vnto all.

CHAP. III.

That wee ought to be at peace both with our selues and with all men.

a p̄s. 51. 12

b Mat. 5. 9

BE first of all at peace with thy selfe: and then thou shalt pacifie others.

A quiet minded man dooth more good.

good then a learned.

The contentious construeth a good thing on the ill part, and hearkeneth vnto euill; but a good and quiet man turneth all things to the best.

Pro. 17.4
d pr. 15.18

The quiet man conceiueth sisterly of no man, but the vnquiet and suspicious, will neither bee quiet himselfe, nor suffer others to be at rest, he both speaketh that many times which hee ought not, and doth not that which hee should; hee considereth what is another mans duty, and neglecteth his owne.

1 co. 13.5

floh. 2.1

Wherefore, doe first thine owne durie, and then looke that another man doe his.

2.1

g Mat. 7.5

Thou hast the trick how to colour and excuse thine owne deddes, yet wilt not thou allow the excuses of another. But reason would thou shouldst excuse another, and accuse thy selfe. If thou wouldest bee borne withal, beare thou with another, and see how farre thou art as yet from true patience and charitie, which fretteth and is offended with none but with it selfe.

h Ro. 2.12

3 pr. 10.12

k 1 Cor.

13.4

To dwell with good & quiet men is no hard matter, for all men naturally doe like thereof, and every man

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defireth quietnesse, and loue such a
 1 Mar. 4. 6 gaine as loue them. But to liue qui-
 etly with crabbed and froward fel-
 lowes, with enemies and ill condi-
 tioned men, is doubtlesse the part of a
 man indeede deseruing commenda-
 m Ma. 5. 44 tion m.

Some are at peace both with them-
 sels, and with others; some will
 neither be quiet themselves, nor suffe-
 r others; these are ill to them-
 selves, but worse to others. Againe,
 some both keepe themselves in cha-
 ritie, and study to bring others vnto
 concord.

And yet all the peace which wee
 haue in this miserable life, dooth ra-
 ther consist in patient suffering, than
 in not feeling aduersity.

The more a man knoweth how to
 suffer miseries, the more quietnesse
 doth he enioy: & such a man is a vic-
 torious conqueror of himselfe, a
 Lord of the world, a friend of
 Christ, and an heire of
 heauen.

CHAP. III.

Of pureness in mind, and plainenesse
in meaning.

MAN is carried ouer earthly things with two wings, to wit, with plainenes *a*. & purenes *b*. Plainenes is of meaning. purenes is of the mind: that mindeth God, this apprehendeth & tasteth what he is *c*. *a* Mat. 6. 16 *b* Mat. 6. 22 *c* Mat. 5. 8

No good action shall hinder thee, if thy minde bee free from all inordinate affections *d*. *d* Mat. 6. 12.

If thou onely seeke, and minde to please God, and to profit other, thou shalt enioy the freedome of mind *e*. *e* Psa. 1. 2. 3

Were thy mind vpright, the whole World were nought vnto thee, but euen a glasse to frame thy life, and a booke of godly instructions *f*. For, nothing is there so small & vile, but it representeth the goodnes of God *g*. *f* Ro. 1. 19 *g* Psa. 8. 2

And if thy minde were good and pure, thou shouldest easily behold, & well perceiue all things *h*. *h* Ma. 6. 22

For a pure mind penetrateth both into heauen, and hell; and as a mans mind is, so doth he iudge of things *i*. *i* Ma. 5. 8 *j* Mat. 6. 13

If there bee any ioy, the man which

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hath a pure heart, doth enioy the
 1 Psal. 51.9 same l: and if there bee any sorrow, &
 misery, he hath it which hath a guilty
 m Eccl. 5.7 conscience m.

20.

As fire taketh away the rust from
 yron, and maketh it bright, so dooth
 repentance wipe away wickednes, &
 maketh of a sinner a new man n.

n Deu. 4

19.

A man that is but warme in godli-
 nesse, flyeth euen the least paines, and
 seeketh outward cōfort: but would
 hee once earnestly beginne to subdue
 himselfe, and stoutly take the ready
 way to a vertuous life, doubtles those
 things which at the first hee counted
 grieuous, will seeme light & easie. p.

p Mat. 11

29.

CHAP. V.

*Of the consideration of a
 mans selfe.*

n Pro. 3.5

WE ought not overmuch to
 trust vnto our selues, for
 many times wee lack both grace and
 will.

b Mat. 23.8

Small is the indgement which wee
 haue, b, and that also wee may easily
 forgoe by negligence.

And yet so blinde are wee, many
 times wee perceiue not so much, and
 many

of the Imitation of Christ.

many times when wee sinne, wee excuse our wickednes, yea & through a blinde affection, suppose it to bee zeale, which is worst of all *d.*

d. 1 cor. 1. 14.

Wee reprehend others for small things, and ouerpasse great offences in our selues *e.* Wee can quickly see *e* Mat. 7. 4 when wee are iniured, and will not easily put vp wrongs; but how wee iniure others our selues, wee neuer call vnto minde.

Assuredly, would a man rightly & wiselie consider his owne doings *f.* *f* Mat. 18. 32. he should finde no cause why to condemn another.

Luk 7. 37

The godly man hath a greater care of himselfe, then of any thing beside, and he which looketh to himselfe diligently, will speake but little of another.

Looke not to proue godly, and religious, vnlesse thou bridle thy tongue from talking of others, and haue a through insight into thy selfe *g.*

g. 1 cor. 11. 38. and

If thou giue thy minde wholly to know thy selfe, and to do the will of God, no outward thing shall moue or trouble thee *h.*

2 cor. 11. 5

Where art thou while thou art not with thy selfe? or when thou hast ouerpast all things, what art thou the

h. Ph. 3. 7. 8

2 cor. 4. 16

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Mar. 16. better, if thou neglect thy selfe :
29. Thou must of necessity neglect all

Mar. 8. 36. other things, & think thereof if thou
minde to attaine vnto peace and qui-
etnesse; yea, thou shalt mightily in-
crease, if thou cast off worldly cares

Mat. 6. 25 k; & conu arwise as greatly decrease,
if thou make any account of earthlie
things l.

1 Tim. 6 8. 9. 10. Count nothing wonderful, nothing
excellent, nothing gratefull, nothing
acceptable, but cyther God; or that

1 Joh. 2. 15. which is of God m: as for worldlie
pleasure, deeme it but vaine n.

1 Cor. 7. 30. The soule which loueth God, in
respect of God contemneth all things

aphi. 8. 7. 8 o: God alone which is eternall p, infi-
p 1 Tim. 17 nite q, and incomprehensible r, is the

Job. 11. 7 comfort of the soules, and the true ioy
reu. 8. 27 of the hart s.

1 Joh. 4. 16

CHAP. VI.

The ioy of a good conscience.

The glory of a good man, consi-
steth in the testimony of a good
conscience a.

1 Cor. 12

1. If thy conscience bee good, thou
b pr. 15. 15 hast a continuall feast b.

A man that hath a good conscience,

cauon

Chap. 6. 83 No ioy to a good conscience
of the Imitation of Christ.

endureth much c yea reioyceeth in ad- c Ro. 8. 35
uersity d, but a wicked man is euer- d Ia. 1. 1. 2
more timorous e and vnquiet f. e Gen. 3. 8

Sweet will be thy sleep, if thy con- f Ge. 45. 6
science accuse thee not g. g Psa. 3. 5

Reioyce not, but in well doing h. h 1 cor. 13

Wicked men at no time reioyce in 6
deede, neither feele the peace of a
godly minde : for as saith the Lord i, i Esa. 48. 22
There is no peace vnto the wicked.
And though they say they liue in
peace, & can neuer be molested with
aduersitie, nor iniured by man; be-
leeue them not. For Todainely shall
the heauy displeasure of God so fall
vpon them k, that both their doings k Ro. 1. 28
shall come to nought, & themselues
vtterly consume away.

For a godly man to reioyce in tri-
bulation is no hard thing l; and so to l Ro. 5. 2. 3
reioyce, is to reioyce in Gods father- Gal. 6. 14
ly care.

Vaine is the praise which is either
ascribed, or receiued of men m. The m Iob. 5. 14
praise of the righteous is in their co- & 12. 43
science n, not in the tongue of men. n 2 co. 1. 11
The righteous reioyce of G O D in o Psa. 9. 3. 14
God o, and in the truth p. p Ier. 9. 24

Hee that seeketh for true and eter- p 1 cor. 8. 3
nall glorie, contemneth worldlie q Iob. 8. 54
praise g; but hee that either couereth, Gal. 6. 14

or

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or doth not contemne temporall, he
doubtlesse weigheth but little celesti-
all glory.

Great quietnes hath he that careth
neither for praise nor dispraise. And
he is well content and quiet whatso-
euer his condition bee, which hath a
cleere conscience.

If thou beest praised, thou art not
the better, nor the worse if thou art
dispraised: what thou art thou art, &
greater thou art not, than God ac-
counteth thee to be.

Consider what thou art within, &
weigh not what thou art thought to
be abroad.

Man beholdeth the countenance,
but God the heart: & man iudgeth
of the deedes, but God of the minde
and intent.

Euermore to do well, and to count
basely of a mans owne selfe, is a
singular token of a modest mind. So
it is an argument of rare integrity,
and faith, to contemne the comfort
of worldly things.

Hee that seeketh no recorde else-
where, hath doubtlesse wholly ad-
dicted himselfe to the seruice of God.
For hee that prayseth himselfe, saith
Paul, is not allowed, but hee whom
the

the Lord praiseth.

To deale with God in mind, and 1 pf. 16. 7. 8.
neuer to be moued outwardly with Act. 2. 26.
any perturbation, is the property of
him that is a spirituall man.

CHAP. VII.

*That our Saviour Christ is to
be loued aboue all
things.*

Blessed is hee which knoweth what
it is to loue Iesus, & for his cause

to contemne all things a. 4 Mar. 8. 34

For loues sake, euen the beloued Luk. 9. 23

must be left; in as much as Iesus will

be loued aboue all things b. 6 Mat. 10

The loue of earthly things is de- 37

ceitfull and fraile: but the loue of Luk. 14. 26

Iesus doth endure and continue. He

which loueth worldly things, shal pe- 6 1 Ioh. 2

rish therewithall c, but he that embra- 17

ceth Iesus, abiderh euer d. 4 Ioh. 3. 16

Loue him & retaine his good will, 6 Mat. 28

which when all things vade away, will

neuer forsake thee e, nor suffer thee to 10

perish f. 1 Ioh. 6. 37

Will thou, wilt thou, one day thou 38. 39. 40

must leaue the world g: and there 1 Ioh. 14. 5

fore stick to Christ both in life and Pla. 39. 5

death

The second booke

h Ro. 14.8 death *h*, commit thee vnto him which
Reu. 14.13 alone can helpe thee when all things
faile.

This thy friend is of that nature,
that hee will onely be loued, he alone
claimeth thy minde for himselfe, and
hee alone will sit there like a King in
his throne.

i Lu. 9.24 Therefore haue thou no fellowship
& 19.8.9 with earthly things; and Iesus glad-
ly will abide with thee.

Thou shalt find that welnigh lost,
whatsoeuer is spent vpon any besides
Iesus.

1.3.1 Ma Neither trust nor stay vpon a wa-
k 2 Kin. 18 uering reed *k*. For all flesh is grasse, &
12 all the grace thereof, is as the flower
IEsa. 40.6 of the field *l*.

m. Ier. 15.5 If thou trust in man *m*, thou shalt ea-
sily be deceived: yea if thou seek cō-
fort, and profit by any other thing,
n Phi. 3.7 thou shalt sustaine great losse *n*.

If thou seekest Iesus in all things,
thou shalt find Iesus: but if thou seeke
thy selfe, thou shalt find thy selfe, but
o Mat. 10 to thy damnation *o*.

37 For whosoever seeketh not Iesus,
Ioh. 12.15 doth more hurt himselfe, than all the
world againe, & his enemies besides,
can doe.

Of

of the Imitation of Christ.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the familiarity with Iesus.

VWhile Iesus is present, all things goe well, and seeme comfortable; but when hee is absent, nothing is sweet. If Iesus speake not in the mind of man, little good can worldly comfort doe him: but speake he but a word, and great ioy shall he feele.

So Mary Magdalen arose quickly from the place where shee wept, as soone as shee heard by Martha that the Master was come and called for her. Happy is the houre wherein Iesus calleth from teares vnto the ioy of the Spirit.

How hard & dry art thou without Iesus? How vaine and foolish, if thou desire any thing without Iesus. Greater shall bee thy losse if thou doe so, then if thou shouldest leese the whole world. For, what can the world doe without Iesus? To bee without Iesus, is a bitter death: but to abide with him, is euen a pleasant life.

If Christ be with thee, what ene-

mic

The second booke

1 Ro. 8. 31 mee can hurt?

Ioh. 10. 20 He which findeth Iesus, findeth a good treasure, or rather, the chiefest felicitie & hee which leeseeth Iesus, leeseeth too much. What said I, too much? Hee leeseeth more, then if hee

1 Mar. 8. 36 lost the whole world.

Hee that liueth without Iesus, is most miserable m: but he whom Iesus fauoureth, is for riches most welthy n.

To liue with Iesus, is great cunning, and to know how to keep him, is most singular wisdom e.

1 Mar. 11. 29 Bee thou meeke and lowly p, and Iesus will come to thee. Yea be thou godly and quiet, and Iesus will abide with thee q.

But turne thou once to outward things r, and thou doost make him forsake thee, and so leese his fauour.

And if hee once forsake thee, vnto whom wilt thou flie s, or what friends wilt thou find?

Without a friend thou canst not long liue t- and if Iesus bee not thy friend before all others, thou shalt mourne without measure, when hee once doth leaue thee u. And therefore thou doost foolishly, if thou eyther trust or reioyce in any besides him v.

Better were it to haue the whole world

world against thee, then Christ Iesus
alone x.

Ro. 8. 31

Wherefore aboue all things which
thou louest, loue Iesus best, loue o-
ther for Iesus sake, but loue Iesus for
his owne.

yma. 10. 37

Hee alone must singularly bee lo-
ued, because he alone is the good and
faithfull friend z. For him and in him z
thou must loue both friend and foe, am. 15. 43
and pray him that all men b may both b 1 Ti. 2. 1
know and loue him.

Neuer couet thou any singular
praise or loue e; for that belongeth
vnto God, who hath none equall d.
Neither wish to haue any body ad-
dicted vnto thee e, nor do thou inor-
dinately loue any man f, but let Iesus
be in thee, and in all good men g.

e Ier. 9. 23

d Da. 3. 29

e 1 cor. 3. 3

f 1 Cor. 7.

g Gal. 1. 10

h Mar. 5. 8

Haue thou a pure minde h, voide
from all hinderance of Worldlie
things i. For thou must bee pure, and
bring an vpright minde vnto Iesus, if
thou wilt behold and see how sweet
the Lord is k.

i lam. 1. 21

k Mar. 5. 8

And doubtlesse thou shalt neuer
come to that point, vnles God pre-
uent thee, and drawe thee l, whereby
thou maiest reiect and renounce all
things, & be coupled to him alone m.
For if thou be in gods fauor, nothing

l Ioh. 6. 44

m Lu. 3. 11

mar. 9. 23 is there, which thou canst not doe n ;
Phil. 4. 13 but if that bee gone , thou art poore,
and feeble, and left as it were to the
• Psal. 104 whip o.

29. Now if thou feele the want there-
of, thou oughtest not to cast downe
p lam. 1. 2. thy selfe, or despaire p , but patiently
abide the good pleasure of God and
beare all chances , to the prayse of
q 1 Pe. 1. 6 Christ Iesus q. For sommer followes
winter, & after night day comes, and
r To. 3. 22 faire weather after stormes r.

CHAP. IX.

Of the want of comfort.

IT is no hard thing to contemne
worldly comfort , whilst thou
• Psal. 94. 19 seekest heauenly a : but to lacke
b Math. 27 both worldly and heauenly consol-
45. ation b , and willingly to beare the ba-
nishment of the minde for the glory
of God, & neither to seeke thy selfe
in any thing , not to respect desert, is
doubtles a great matter, or rather the
greatest of all.

For what great thing is it to be me-
• Psal. 94. 19 rie & godly, while God fauoureth c ?
who doth not wish to see that houre ?
Hee rideth cheerefully , whom the
grace

of the Imitation of Christ.

grace of God carrieth: & what marvell if hee feele no burthen, which is borne of the almighty *2*, and led by *2* Esa. 10 the best guide? *20*

Greatly doe wee delight our selues *Mat. 11. 18* with some one thing of this world or other, and hardly can man forsake himselte altogether: therefore mightily and a long while must hee strue, *Mat. 19. 22* before he can learne to subdue himselfe, and to drawe all his senses vnder the obedience of God, *Luk. 9. 23*

As long as man dependeth on himselfe, hee will easily slide vnto worldly delights: but the vnfaigned louer of Christ, & earnest follower of vertue, neither inclineth vnto those comforts, nor seeketh such delight of senses, but rather vehement exercises, and sore labours for the loue of Christ.

Therefore if at any time spirituall *Gal. 6. 14* comfort bee giuen thee from aboue, receiue the same with thanksgiuing, and thinke that it is Gods gift *1 Cor. 4. 7* g, not that thou doost deserue it, and be not *Col. 2. 18* putt vp therewithall *h*.

Be not high minded or proud, because of thy gift *Ro. 11. 20* i, but so much the more humbler rather, and in all thy doings circumspect and feaful.

For

The second booke.

For the time of comfort will passe away, and temptation will follow.

And though thy consolation bee gone, despaire not out of hand, but looke for health from aboue, and that
k Ro. 5. 3 with modestie and patience k. For
Rom. 15. 4 God is able to endue thee with a more
12 cor. 1. 3 ample benefit and consolation l.

Neither is this a new thing, and strange to such as tread in the pathes
m Psa. 94. 1 of godhessle m. For men of greatest
Aa. 14. 19 holiness, and the old Prophets, haue
n Psa. 34 tasted such alteration many times n.

And therefore saide one vpholden
19 by the power of God, on this wise o,
o Psa. 30. 6 In my prosperity I said, I shall neuer
be moued.

Behold; what happened vnto him when that was taken away, he ioineth
7 afterward in these wordes: But thou
diddest hide thy face, and I was troubled.

Yet for all that he despaired not, but
8 so much the more earnestly prayed
vnto God, saying; Then I cried vnto
thee, O Lord, & prayed to my God.

At last hee obtained the end of
his prayer, and confesseth that he was
9 heard, when hee said; O Lord my
God, I cried vnto thee, & thou hast
10 restored me. But wherein? Thou hast
turned

turned my mourning into ioy, thou
hast loosed my sack, and girded mee
with gladnes.

Now if these things haue happe-
ned to men of such wonderfull holi-
nesse, we miserable and poore soules
should not despaire *p*, though we be *p Ro. 15.4*
sometime in colde, and sometime in *Rcu. 3.29*
heat, in as much as the spirit goeth, &
commeth at his pleasure *q*. Therefore *q Ioh. 3.8*
saith Iob *r*, Thou doost so magnific *r Iob. 7.17*
him, that thou settest thine heart vpon
him, & dost visit him euery morning,
and triest him euery moment.

So then, in what thing should I
hope, or to whom should I trust, but
only to the infinite & heauenly mer-
cy of almighty God *s*? *s Psal. 5.11*

For, bee it that I haue about mee and *10.7*
good and godly brethren, & faithfull
friends, and holy bookes, and plea-
sant speech, and sweet musicke, yet
little doth all this helpe, little doth
it comfort, if beeing forsaken of
God *t*, I am left to my selfe: at that *t ps. 119.50*
time the best remedy is patience *u*, & *u Lu. 21.19*
the denying of my selfe *x*, according *x Lu. 9.23*
to the will of God.

For my part, I neuer yet found
man so religious, that hath not felt
sometime the lack of Gods assistance
and

: quietnes to come.

The second booke

and at sometime been cooler in zeale than at others: neither hath any godly man beene so carried aloft, & illuminated, but either sooner or later, at one time or other, bee hath beene

7 Ro. 7. 14 tempted y.

Gal. 5. 7

He is not worthie to behold God in deepe contemplation, who hath

2 Job 5. 17 felt no misery for Gods sake 2. For

Mar. 5. 10 commonly the temptation that goeth afore, is a signe of consolation to

4 Ps. 93. 12 come afterward 4. And they which are tried with temptation, are promised

6 Ia. 2. 12 the ioyes of heauen 6. To him that overcometh, saith the Spirit e, will I

8 Reu. 2. 7 giue to eate of the tree of life.

Furthermore, GOD sendeth his comfort, that man may be the stronger to beare aduersitie 4. And tenta-

2 Ro. 5. 2 tion followeth, that hee waxe not

2 Cor. 12. 7 proud of his gifts.

f 1 Pet. 5. 8 Satan sleepeth not f, and the flesh

g Ro. 7. 13 is not yet dead g: therefore at all

Gal. 3. 16 times prepare thy selfe vnto battell h,

h 1 Tim. 4. 7 for on every side thou hast

6. 12 trouble some ene-

i Pla. 9. 1. 7 mies i.

CHAP. XI.

Of thankesfullnes to God for
his benefites.

Vhat seekest thou for quiet-
nesse, seeking thou art born
vnto labour *a*?

a Ge. 3. 19

Iob. 5. 7

b Lu. 21. 19

c Eccl. 7. 4

Giue thy selfe to patience *b*, rather
than to pleasure, & to beare the crosse,
than to delectation *c*.

For what worldling is there which
would not willingly enioy spirituall
comfort, if he might at all times; as
that which surpasseth all the ioyes of
the world, & pleasures of the flesh *d*?

d Io. 16. 22

Phi. 4. 7

e 1 Pe. 2. 13

f Ro. 14. 17

For all worldly delights are eyther
vaine or vile *e*; but the ioyes of the
Spirit are onely sweet, onely honest,
springing of vertue, and powred in-
to pure mindes by God himselfe.

But these heauenly consolations
are of that nature, that no man can
keepe them at his pleasure, for so-
much as temptation ceaseth not a while
long time *g*.

g Luk. 4. 3

Esa. 66. 3

Two things are great enemies to
this heauenly ioy, false freedome of
the minde *h*, & too much confidence
in our selues.

h Ier. 17. 5.

God

The second booke

God dooth well: which bestoweth
 on man the benefit of his comfort;
 but man dooth ill, which doth not
 k^{Thes. 5. 18} with thanksgiving & acknowledge
 1^{1 cor. 4. 7} God to bee the giuer of the same.

Hence it is, that God poureth not
 his benefits vpon vs, euen because we
 are vngratefull, & send not all things
 backe vnto the spring of the Foun-
 taine.

He which giueh thanks, beggeth
 a new benefit: and that is commonlie
 taken from the proudly vngratefull,
 which is bestowed vpon the modest-
 ly thankfull.

I like not that comfort which taketh
 from me all sorrow for sinne:
 neither desire I that knowledge that
 makes me forget my selfe.

For, all that is hie is not holy, nei-
 ther is euery desire pure; nor all that
 is sweet wholesome: nor euery thing
 that liketh man, pleaseth almightie
 God.

But those benefits are welcome vnto
 me, which make me humbler then
 I was before, and readier to forsake
 my selfe.

He whom God hath schooled both
 by prosperity and aduersity, will ar-
 rogate nothing vnto himselfe, but
 confesse

of the imitation of Christ
 confesse rather his naked nettle & cal-
 serie.

Giue vnto God that which is Gods,
 and ascribe vnto thy selfe that which
 is thine; that is, giue God thanks for
 his benefits, and ascribe sinne to thy
 selfe, and for sinne thinke thou de-
 seruest punishment.

Take the lowest roome, and the
 highest shall be giuen thee, for with-
 out the lowest there can bee no high-
 est.

Those whom G O D accounteth
 chiefest for holinesse, esteeme them-
 selues for vilest; and the more glori-
 ous they are, the more humbly they
 behaue themselves, beeing full of ce-
 lestiall truth & glory, not of vaine-
 glorie desirous.

They which depend vpon God, ne-
 uer waxe insolent: and they which a-
 scribe vnto God, whatsoever good
 thing they haue, receiue not praise
 one of another, but seek it of God,
 whom they wish might bee extolled
 aboue all things both of themselves,
 and of all other holy men, & to him-
 ward alwaies they tend.

Wherefore, bee thankfull in small
 things, so shalt thou bee meet to at-
 taine greater.

Iob. 1. 21

1 Tim. 6. 7

1. Thes. 18.

Dan. 9. 5

Deu. 28

15

pro. 25. 6

b Ioh. 5. 44

e pla. 34. 3

d Math. 23

21.

e Ia. 1. 17

Albeit, ~~the~~ the least, and vilest gifts, for glorious and greatest. For if thou respect the maiesty of the giuer, no reward or gift ought to let me vile or little.

For that is no small gift which the most high God giueth, whatsoeuer it bee; yea if hee giue thee stripes and correction, thou oughtest to receiue it in good worth, in asmuch as it maketh alwaies to our welfare, whatsoeuer hee sendeth, or suffereth to come vnto vs.

He that would keepe the fauour of God, let him both bee thankfull for f Col. 3. 17 benefits giuen, and patient if they g col. 1. 12 be taken away; that they may come againe, let him pray: and least hee lose them when they are come, let him be wise and humble.

CHAP. XI.

The small number that loue Christ vnfeinedly.

CHrist hath now adayes many that loue his heavenly kingdome,
 e Lu. 9. 59. but fewe that will willingly beare his
 Mar. 19. 16 Crosse; many that desire comfort, but

Chap. 11. *Of many that follow Christ
of the imitation of Christ.*

but few adversity *b*: many partakers *d* *Mat. 23. 13.*
of his meate *c*, but few of his com- *Joh. 6. 26.*
munion. All men would reioice with *d* *Mat. 23. 13.*
Christ *d*, but few sustaine adversity *e* with him *e*. Many follow Iesus euen *e* *Mat. 23. 13.*
to the breaking of bread *f*, but few *f* *Mat. 23. 13.*
drink of his cuppe *g*. Many honour *g* *Joh. 6. 26.*
him for his miracles *h*, but few follow *g* *Lu. 12. 54.*
the shame of the crosse *i*. Many loue *b* *Mar. 7. 37.*
him while prosperitie doth last *h*, and *i* *Gal. 3. 15.*
many praise, yea and thank him while *k* *Mar. 10.*
they receiue any effort at his hands *l*, *37*
but if he but hide himselfe, and for- *l* *Joh. 6. 14.*
take them for a while, they fall either
to bitter complaining, or to utter de-
spaire.

But they that loue Iesus, not for
any pleasure that they looke to finde,
but for Iesus sake, they as well in mi-
serie and sorrowe, as in prosperitie,
commend him *m*, and thanke him *m* *Mat. 23. 13.*
thermore; which they will alwayes *18*
do, albeit he should neuer giue them *Rom. 5. 8.*
any comfort at all. Such is the force
of the vained loue of Christ, it see-
keth neither outward profit, nor it
selfe *n*. *1 Co. 13. 5.*

So that as many as seeke alwayes
for pleasure, may rightly be termed *Joh. 10. 12.*
hirelings *o*: and such as hunt after
profit and liue *p*, loue themselves, *p* *Mar. 10.*

G. 2. more.

The second booke

more then Christ out of doubt, How many will serue Christ freely without gaine? Or who is so spirituall that will forsake all? I say who can finde him that is truly poore in spirit, and free from all worldly things? that precious fellow may bee sought the whole world ouer.

If a man feede the poore with all his goods, hee hath yet done nothing; and if he chastise himselfe with sorrow for his sins, it is yet too little; and though hee knew all secrets, and all knowledge, hee is yet far from the marke: yea were he most singularly vertuous, and could burne for religion, yet lacks hee something, euen one thing which is needfull. And what is that? Euen that when hee hath forsaken all things, he forsake himselfe, and going wholly out of himselfe, retaine no peece of selfe or priuate loue within him.

When hee hath doone what hee knowes should be done, let him think that nothing hee hath done, neither let him glorie in that hee may bee great, but confesse rather that hee is an vnprofitable seruant, euen as the truth it selfe doth say: When yee haue done all things, which are commanded

of the Imitation of Christ.

manded you, say, We are vnprofitable seruants, wee haue done but that which was our dutie to doe.

Then at length will he finde himselfe needy, and naked in spirit *a*, and *a* Mat. 5.3 may say with the Prophet *b*; I am *b* Psa. 86.1 poore and needy. And yet notwithstanding, none is richer, none freer, none mightier than hee which can fortake the world, and himselfe too, *c* Lu. 5.11 and debase himselfe euen vnder the basest things *d*. *d* Phi. 2.5

CHAP. XIII

Of patient bearing the Crosse
of Christ.

THIS seemeth a hard saying to many, For sake thy selfe *a*, Take vpp thy Crosse, and followe mee: *a* Mat. 10.24 But thole last words will be much harder *b*, Depart from me ye curted into everlasting fire. For they which now gladly doe heare, and follow the saying of the crosse, shall not then dread the heauie sentence of eternal punishment *c*. *b* Mar. 8.34 *c* Mat. 25.41 *d* Phi. 1.25

Then all the seruants of the crosse, which haue liued after the example of him that was crucified, shall approach

The second booke

d Wil. 4. 1 vnto Christ with great boldnes d.

Mat. 19. 28 Why then fearest thou the crosse,

e Lu. 22. 28 which is the way vnto heauen e?

Rom. 8. 17 In the Crosse saluation is; in the
crosse life; in the crosse, ayde against
enemies; in the crosse celestiall com-
fort; in the crosse strength of minde;
ioy of the spirit is in the crosse; in the
crosse the chiefest vertue; perfection
of holinesse is in the crosse: finally,
without the crosse, there is neither

f Gal. 2. 19 saluation of the soule, nor hope of e-
& 6. 14 ternall life f.

Wherefore take vp thy crosse, and
follow Christ, and thou shalt go into

g Lu. 9. 23 eternall life g. Hee went before thee

h Io. 19. 17 bearing his own Crosse h, and for thy

i Gal. 3. 13 sake died on the Crosse i, that thou
also mightest beare the crosse, and

k 1 pe. 2. 21 desire to die vpon the same k. For if
thou die with him, thou also shalt liue
with him; If thou suffer with him,

l 2 Tim. 2
11. 12 thou shalt also raigoe with him l. For
know this, In the crosse, and in dying,

all things doe consist: neither is there
any other way vnto life and quietnes,
then by the crosse, and daily mortify-
ing of thy selfe m.

m Rom. 6

3. 4

Gal. 6. 14

Whithersoever thou turnest thy self
or castest thine eyes, thou shalt finde
neither aboue nor beneath, a better
way

of the Imitation of Christ.

way vnto blisse, then by the crosse. n Luk. 24

Though thou set all things in ne- 26.
uer so good order, yet can it not bee
auoided but something thou must
suffer either volūtarily, or against thy
will, & alwaies run vpon the crosse.
For either sicknes of body, or sorrow
of minde will vexee thee. Either God
will forsake, or man afflict, or (which
worse is) thou wilt bee a burden to
thy selfe, and that in such sort, as no
remedy can salue, nor comfort quiet
thee, but of necessity thou must beare
it as long as God thinks good. p Phi. 1. 32

For it is Gods will to haue thee suf-
fer miserie without comfort q, that q Mat. 27
thou maiest submit thy selfe wholly 46.
vnto him, and bee more humble tho-
rough aduersities. r Psal. 119.

No man so feebleth the paines of 67.
Christ in his minde, as he which hath
suffered the like himselfe s. j Gal. 6. 17

So that the crosse is prepared, and
abideth for thee in euery place, nei-
ther shalt thou escape it, run where
thou wilt; for wheresoeuer thou be- s Ioh. 16. 1
comest, thou bearest thy selfe about,
and shalt finde thy selfe alwaies. n Rom. 7

Turne thee vpward, turne thee 14.
downward, turne thee outward, or
tutne thee inward, euery where thou
maist

The second booke

maiest finde the crosse ; and alwaies
thou must haue patience, if thou wilt
enjoy the peace of minde, and crown

* Lu 9.24. of rest.

& 11.19

If thou wilt carrie the crosse wil-
lingly, the crosse will carry thee even-
to the desired end, namely where mi-
sery hath an end y, which will not bee
in this world z. But if thou beare it
grudgingly, thou doost increase thy
burden, and presse downe thy selfe
the more, and yet must thou beare it
do what thou canst. If thou escapest
one misery, thou shalt assuredly fall
in to another b, and perhaps into a
worse.

Thinkest thou to escape that which
no mortall man could ever yet doe ?
What man euer liued in the world,
without his crosse & miserie d ? Yea,
euen our Lord & Saviour Christ was
no one houre without grieve & trou-
ble while hee liued heere on earth.
For, Christ suffered f, and so entred
into his glory, and wilt thou seek an-
other path and not walk in this king-
licke way ? The whole life of Christ
was euen a meere crosse, and vexati-
on g, and wilt thou seeke for rest and
quietnesse ?

* Esa. 53.3

John. 7.7

Thou art out of the way, surely thou

art

of the Imitation of Christ.

art out of the way, if thou lookest for any thing but misery in this world; seeing the whole life of a mortall man is full of troubles, & compassed about with calamities *h*. And the more *h* Iob. 14.1 godly a man is, the more often doth hee suffer aduersitie: for the sorenesse of his affliction increaseth through his loue of God *i*. *Ro. 8.35*

And yet is not this man of whom *Phil. 1.14* wee speake without comfort, in as much as hee beleeueth, that by this crosse he shall reape much fruit *k*. *Apoc. 94.18*

For whilst willingly hee commeth vnder the Crosse, it falleth out that the whole burden of troubles is turned vpon the confidence of Gods heavenly comfort *l*; and the more *l* *Pla. 3.22* the flesh by calamitie is weakned, & *91.2* the more the Spirit is confirmed by *m* *Ro. 7.23* the comfort of mind *m*. Yea, so is he *2 cor. 4.16* strengthened many times, through the feeling of trouble and aduersitie, (of such force is his loue which suffereth after the ensample of Christ *n*) *n* *1 pe. 2.21* that hee would not wish to bee without sorrow and affliction *o*. For hee *o* *Rom. 6.5. & 8.35* beleeueth that he is the more acceptable to G O D, the more he can suffer for his sake *p*. *p* *Act. 5.41*

And yet it is not by the power of *2 cor. 4.16*
 G 5 man

The second booke

man, but of the mercie of God, that
bee can in his fraile flesh loue, and
through the zeale of the Spirit, set
vpon those things, which man by
nature doth flie and abhorre.

2 Ga. 5. 16
1 Ti. 1. 12

For man of himselfe cannot indure
the crosse, loue afflictions, tame and
bring vnder the body, shun promoti-
on, abide to be reuiled, despise him-
selfe, yea couet to be despised, beare
aduersity, and contemne the prosperi-
tie of this world.

1 Lu. 22. 23

1 2 Co. 5. 14

If thou depend vpon thy selfe, thou
shalt doe none of these things, but if
thou trust in God, hee will send thee
comfort from aboue, whereby the
world and the flesh shall bee brought
vnder thy subiection. Yea thou shalt
not feare the malice of the diuell, if
thou be stedfast in faith.

1 Joh. 6. 7

2 2 Cor. 14

20.

1 ps. 91. 5

1 1 Pet. 5. 9

24.

Thou therefore suffer affliction as
a good soldier of Iesus Christ, who
for thy sake was crucified.

1 Ti. 2. 3

1 1 Pet. 2

24.

Prepare thy selfe to suffer much ad-
uersitie, and sundry incommunities
in this miserable life: for as much as
such is thy lot where soeuer thou be-
commest: for lurke where thou wilt,
yet by no meanes shalt thou escape
these troubles, but must beare them

1 Lu. 11. 29 of necessity.

Drinke

Drinke heartily of the Lords cup e. e Mat. 20
if thou desirest to bee his friend and 22
companion.

And as touching consolation, refer
that to the will of God, let him giue
it at his discretion, but yelde thou
thy selfe to the bearing of aduersitie,
and let it be thy ioy d. For the afflicti- d Act. 5. 41
ons of this present time, are not an- lam. 1. 2
swerable to the glory which shall bee
heereafter e, though thou couldest e Ro. 8. 18
beare them all thy selfe.

After thou art come to that passe,
that thou canst with pleasure and ioy
endure aduersity for Christ his sake,
thinke thou art an happy man, which
hast found the kingdome of heauen
here on earth f. On the other side, as f Mat. 5. 10
long as it griueth thee to beare it, so
long art thou in ill case, & vexed eue-
ry where with the sight of miserie g. g Pr. 10. 19
But doe thy duty, that is, prepare thy
selfe to the Crosse, and to die, and in
short time shalt thou bee assisted, and
finde quietnes h. h 1 pe. 1. 12

If thou wert taken vp euen into the
third heauen with Paul i, yet wert
thou not assured that none aduersitie i 2 co. 11. 2
shall come to thee. I will shew him,
saith Christ k, how many things hee k Act. 9. 16
must suffer for my sake.

So

The second booke

So that of necessity thou must suffer, if thy minde be to loue and serue

¶ Luk. 9. 23 Christ euermore 1.

And would to God thou wert counted woorthie to suffer for the name of

¶ Act. 5. 41 Iesus m: then what glorie to thy selfe

¶ Ro. 5. 2 n, ioy to the Saints of God a, & pro-

¶ 1 Cor. 12 fit to mankind p, would arise? For all commend patience, though few will

¶ Col 1 24 suffer q. Doubtlesse, there is great

¶ Mat. 16 cause why thou shouldest endure a little for Christ, seeing thou canst suf-

¶ 1 co. 6. 25 fer a great deale more for the world r.

And know this for a truth, that thou must liue by dying to thy selfe. And

¶ 2 Tim. 2 the more a man dyeth to himselfe, the more hee liueth to God. No man is

meet to cōprehend celestially things, valesse hee can be content to beare

¶ Ro. 8. 35 aduersity for Christ his sake.

To conclude, nothing is either more acceptable in the sight of God, or profitable to thy selfe in this life, then willingly to suffer aduersity for the name of Christ; insomuch, that if choyce were giuen, thou shouldest chuse to suffer for Christ, rather then

¶ Ro. 12. 12 to be refreshed with much consolati-

¶ Io. 15. 20 on u; for so shalt thou become the

¶ 1 pet. 2. 21 more like to Christ x, & all his holy

¶ Mat. 5. 11 seruants y.

of the Imitation of Christ.

Neither dooth our coming forward consist in the store of pleasures & comfort, but rather in bearing great evils and aduersity γ

 γ Ro. 5.3

And if any thing had beene better, γ Iam. 1.2
or more expedient for man than to
suffer miserie α , doubtlesse Christ α Ioh. 14
would haue showne the same both γ

by words and deeds. But now in plain
words, he doth counsel both his own
disciples, and as many as are desirous
to follow him, to beare the crosse, in
these words δ ; If any man will fol-
low me, let him forsake himselfe, and
take vp his crosse, and follow me.

 δ Mar. 16

24

Mar. 8.34

Therefore all things beeing read
ouer and ouer, and put in practise, let
this bee the end of our speech ϵ : By ϵ Act. 14

22

many afflictions we must enter
into the kingdome of

GOD.

*Thus endeth the second
Booke.*

The third Booke of the IMITATION of CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

*Of the spiritual communication be-
tween Christ and the faith-
full soule.*

a Ps. 28. 8



Will hearken what
the Lord within me
will say. Blessed is
the soule which
heareth the Lord
speaking within
her, and from his mouth receiveth the
word of comfort.

b ps. 38. 13

Blessed are the eares which can
heare when God whispereth, and doe
nought regard the noyse of the world

c ps. 61. 12

b. Yea blessed are the eares which
listen not to the outward sound, but
to the truth speaking to the heart.

d Mat. 16. 17

Blessed are the eyes which are close

e Ioh. 8. 43

from seeing outward, but open to be-
hold inward things.

f Ps. 1. 12

Blessed are they who pierce vnto
spirituall things, and prepare them-
selues more and more by dailie medi-
tations, to come vnto the know-
ledge

of the Imitation of Christ.

ledge of Gods heavenly mysteries.

Blessed are they who reioyce in ser-
uing God, & cast off all those things
as may withdraw thē from so doing.

e. O my soule consider these things, & e Luke 10
banish from thy mind carnall affecti- 14.
ons f, so shalt thou vnderstand what f Gal. 5. 19
thy Lord God will say within thee g. g psa. 85. 8

Thus saith thy friend, I am thy sal- h Eph. 1. 7
uation h, thy peace i, and thy life k, i lo. 16. 33
sticke vnto mee, and thou shalt finde k Job. 14. 6
quietness. Leave all worldly things l Ma. 14. 28
m, and seeke after heavenly n. For m Lu. 16. 13
what are all things in this world, but n Lu. 22. 31
vaine o? or what good can they doe, if Col. 3. 2
God forsake thee p? o Ecc. 2. 11

Wherefore, all things renounced, p Ma. 6. 26
seeke vnfaignedly to please God q that Mar. 8. 36
thou maicst attaine vnto the true feli- q Eccl. 12.
citier. 18.

f Reu. 1. 10

CHAP. II.

That the Truth speaketh inwardly
without noise of words.

SERVANT.

Speake Lord, for thy seruant hea-
reth. I am thy seruant, O giue a 1 Sam. 3
me vnderstanding b, that I may learn 10.
thy statutes. b psa. 119. 34

Incline

Incline my soule vnto the wordes
of thy mouth, euen vnto thy words,
e Deut. 32. which still downe like the deaw e.

2.
d Exo. 20. The Israelites saide vnto Moses in
old time d: 3 Talke thou with vs, and
19. wee will heare, but let not God talke
with vs, least wee die. But I pray not
so, Lord I pray not so, but with the
Prophet Samuel rather, I beseech
e 1 Sam. 3 thee, saying e: 3 Speake Lord, for thy
10. seruant heareth.

And let not Moses, nor any other
Prophet speak to mee, but thou Lord,
which inspirest and lightenest all the
f 1 Pet. 1 Prophets f, speake thou to mee. For
21. thou canst instruct mee without their
helpe: but they can profit nothing
without thee g.

g 1 cor. 3. 7 They may sound out words in
mine eare, but they bring not the
h Ioh. 14 spirit h. They can speak trimly, but if
10. thou holde thy peace, they inflame
i Mat. 7. 28 not the mind i. They teach the let-
k Reu. 5. 9 ter, but thou openest the meaning k.

They talke of deepe things, but thou
vnlockest the sense of that which was
l Rom. 16 sealed vppel. They pronounce the
25. commandements, but thou helpest
to fulfill them. They shew the way,
but thou giuest strength to walke in
m 1 Pe. 1. 2 the same m. They deale outwardly
with

with the senses, but thou teachest and
 lighrenest the mindes *n*. They water, *n* Ep. 1. 15
 but thou giuest the increase. They *o* 1 co. 3. 6
 cry with open mouthes, but thou gi- 7.
 uest wisdom vnto the hearer *p*. *p* Ioh. 6. 68

So then, let not Moses talke with
 me, but speak thou my Lord & God,
 which art the euerlasting truth, least I
 die, and proue vnfruitfull: and least,
 beeing outwardly admonished, and
 not inwardly inflamed, the Word
 heard, not done *q*; knowne, not lo- *q* Ma. 7. 26
 ued, beleueed not obserued, make *r* Rom. 2. 8
 vnto my condemnation. *s* Iam. 1. 22

Wherefore, speak Lord, for thy ser-
 uant heareth *t*. For thou hast the *t* 1 Sa. 3. 10
 words of eternall life. Speak to mee *u* Ioh. 6. 68
 euen that which may be to the com-
 fort of my soule, to the amendment
 of my life, and to the aduancement
 of thine euerlasting glory, Amen.

CHAP. III.

*That the words of God with all reue-
 rence should be heard, and that they are
 not vnderstood of most men.*

LORD.

SONNE, heare my words,
 for they are most comfortable,
 and farre exceed all the know-
 ledge

ledge of Philosophers, and wisemen
a Pro. 9. 10. of this world a.

b Io. 6. 63. My words are spirit and life b, and
are not to be weighed by the sense of
man, nor drawne to serue for vaine
pleasure, but must bee heard with si-
lence, and receiued with humility &
greedinesse.

c pl. 94. 12 S E R. Blessed is the man e, whom
thou chastisest, o Lord, and teachest
in thy law, that thou maist giue him
rest from the dayes of euill, while the
pit is digged for the wicked.

L O R D. I both inspired the Pro-
phets in old time d, and cease not in
these dayes to speake vnto all : but
many are deafe, and will not heare
my words e. Most harken vnto the
world, rather then to God, and more
gladly obey the desire of the flesh f,
then his heavenly will.

The world promisseth but tempo-
rall & small things, and they serue it
euen with greedinesse g. I promise
most excellent and eternall things h,
and men care not for them.

Who with such a desire serueth, and
obeieth me in all things as they serue
the world i and the Prince thereof k ?
Bee ashamed hereof, & if thou woul-
dest knowe why, hearken : for small
wages

wages many runne a great way, but
for eternall life fewe will once ſteppe
their foote out of doores. 1. Filthie *Mar. 7. 4*
gaine is earnestly ſought for, for one
penny ſomtime they ſhamefully con-
tend: for a vaine thing and ſmall re-
ward, men feare not euen to wearie
themſelues night and day: but for
goods immutable, for a rewarde vn-
eſteemable, for honours endleſſe, and
immortall glorie, they will take no
paines.

Wherefore, bluſh I ſay, thou ſloth-
full & whining ſervant, that they ſhall
bee more ready to fall into the pit of
hell, then thou to come vnto heauen,
that they ſhall take more pleaſure in
vanity, than thou in the truth.

Againe, they many times miſſe of
their purpoſe: but what I promiſe, I *Psal. 37*
fulfill, and he that truſteth in me ſpee- *34. & 23*
deth well *Psal. 4. 5*. That which I promiſe in
words, I performe in deeds, to him *Psal. 46*
which continueth conſtant vnto the *11*
end in louing me, I reward all good *Mat. 10*
things, and I am a diligent examiner *22*
of all religious men *p.* Write my ſay- *Mat. 13. 14*
ings in thy hart, & meditate earnestly *Heb. 11*
thereupon. For in the time of ſentati- *36*
on they will do thee good *9. Psal. 119*

That with reading now thou doſt *92*

not conceiue, in the time of curing
thou shalt vnderstand. And two waies
I am wont to cure mine elect, to wit
1 Sa. 2.6 by tentation, and by comfort r: and
Psa. 66.8 two waies I instruct them daily, first
Tob. 13.2 by reprehending their wickednesse,
then by exhorting to proceed in ver-
tue and godlinesse.

f Ioh. 5.24 Hee that heareth my words f, and
Ioh. 12.48 despiseth them, hath that whereby he
shall bee condemned in the day of
iudgement.

CHAP. IIII.

*A prayer for the attaining of the true
knowledge of Gods heavenly will,
and and for Zeale of religion.*

SERVANT.

O Lord my God, which art all my
goods & riches, what am I that
I dare speake vnto thee?

I am thy poore seruant and a vile
worme a, yea much more vile and
poore, then I either knowe, or dare
shew forth b.

And yet, Lord, remember euen
this one thing, that I am nothing,
that I haue nothing, that I am no-
thing worth. Thou alone art good c,
thou

Chap. 4. 217 The perfectness of God, and
of the Imitation of Christ. wretchednes of man

thou alone art righteous d, thou alone d Iob. 9. 23
art holy e, thou canst all f, thou dost e De. 33. 4
all g, thou fillest all h, only the wicked f Iob 11. 7
thou sendest empty away. g Esa. 44. 6

Remember (O Lord) thy tender h 1 King 8
mercies k, and fill me with thy fauor; 27
thou wilt that none of thy workes k Psal. 35. 6
should serue in vaine. For how can I Luk. 1. 54
stand vpright in this wretched world,
vnlesse thy mercy and fauour do hold
me vp l?

Turne not thy cheerefull counte 1 Psal. 119
nance from thy seruant m, defer not 41
to heale mee from day to day, with m psal. 51
draw not thy comfort, that my soule 111
be not as the thirstie land n. n Psal. 143. 6
o Psal. 143

O Lord, teach me to do thy wil o 10
teach mee to walke woorthilie, and
humbly in thy presence. For thou
art my wisdom p, and knowest mee p 1 Co. 2. 30
indeed q. Yea, thou knewest ms, not q ps. 139. 1
onely atore I was conceiued in my r psal. 90. 3
Mothers wombe, but also atore the Rom. 8. 29
very world was made r. So be it.

The

CHAP. V.

That wee must walke sincerely and
humbly before God.

LORD,

Mat. 5.8

SONNE, walke thou vprightly
in my sight, and seeke me alwaies
in singleness of mind *a*.

Ioh. 8.32

Hce that walketh vprightly, wal-
keth safely; for the truth deliuereth
him from deceiuers & slanders of the
wicked. And if the truth shall make
you free *b*, you shall bee free indeede,
and feare nought the vaine wordes of
men.

Pla. 43.4

SERVANT. Truth. Lord;
therefore I beseech thee deale so with
me, that is, Let thy truth instruct me,
defend me, and bring me to a blessed
end *c*. Yea, let the same thy truth de-
liuer me from all wicked lusts, & in-
ordinate affections; so will it come
to passe, that I shall enjoy a wonder-
full freedome of the minde *d*.

Ioh. 3.9

epi. 25.4.5

Iocel. 2.82

Eze. 18.30

LORD. And I will teach thee
what is right and acceptable in my
sight *e*. Call thy sins to remembrance
continually, & that with hearty sobes,
and sorrow *f*, and neuer brag of any
good

good deedes which thou hast done g. 2 1 co. 4. 6
For in very deed thou art a sinner b, b ps. 143. 2
and subiect to many infirmities of
the mind; yea by nature alwaies thou
tendest vnto vanity i, and maiest ea. i Gen. 6. 5
sily fall, easily be overcome, and ea-
sily troden downe, and cast to the
ground k.

k Ro. 3. 23

Finally, thou hast nothing wherein
to boast l, but many things to make l 1 cor. 4. 7
thee humble; being much weaker
then thou canst perceine. So then,
looke that none of thy deedes seeme
great in thy sight, or excellent, or
precious or wonderfull; yea, count
nothing excellent, nothing glorious,
nothing commendable, and to bee
sought for indeede, but onelie that
which is eternall m.

m ps. 119

Let the cuerlasting truth like thee 14. 24 31
aboue all things n, & thine extreame n ps. 42. 10
vileness mislike thee o. o ps. 108. 31

Feare nothing, flie nothing, mislike
nothing so much as thy finnes & wic-
kednes p, they should more disquiet p Psal. 119
thee then the losse of the dearest 138.
things in the world.

Some behaue themselves not sin-
cerely enough towards mee, seeking
out earnestly, thorough curiositie
and pride, my secrets, and mysteries,
neg-

*Fly sin as thou wouldst
the diuell.*

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Chap. 1

The third booke

neglecting themselves and their sal-
9 Ro. 1. 21 uation 9; these fellowes by reason of
1 cor. 13. 3 their pride and curiositie fall manie
7 Ro. 1. 26 times into grievous tentations 7 tho-
rough my displeasure.

But stand thou continually in awe
of the heauy sentence of the almighty
Spl. 90. 11 ty God, & search not out the works
of the most High, but search out
painfully, both how much euill thou
hast committed, and what good thou
hast left vndone.

Somes Religion is altogether in
their books, or in pictures, or in som
outward signes, and ceremonies 7 som
7 Mat. 23. 5 haue it in their mouth 7, but not in
7 Mat. 7. 21 their hart. And contrariwise, some be-
7 Mat. 5. 8 ing cleere in minde, & pure in hart 7,
doe couer alwaies after heauenlie
3 Col. 3. 1 things 7, hearken vnwillingly vnto
earthly matters, and serue the necessi-
ties of nature with griefe, & sorrow:
& these men perceiue what the spirit
of Truth speaketh within them; how
it teacheth them to despise earthly, &
to desire celestiaall things; to cōdemn
7 Psa. 1. 13 the world, and to wish for Heauen,
Phil. 3. 8 night and day 7.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

*A prayer and thankesgiuing to God
for his benefites.*

SERVANT.

O Celestiall Father, Father of my Lord Iesu Christ *a*, I praise thee for vouchsafing to remember mee a *b* poore and sinfull wretch *b*. *a* 2 cor. 1. 3 *b* 1 cor. 1. 3 9. 10.

O Father of mercye, and **G O D** of all comfort, I yeeld thee humble thanks, for refreshing mee, unworthy all comfort, with thy heavenly comfort *d*. *c* 2 cor. 1. 3 *d* 2 cor. 7. 6

Euermore will I praise and magnifie thee together with thine onelie begotten Sonne, and the holy Ghost the comforter *e* for euer and euer *f*. *e* 1 Ioh. 5. 7 *f* 1 Tim. 1. 17.

O Lord my God which louest me so holily, I will reioyce with mine whole heart, when thou shalt come into my minde.

Thou art my glory, and the ioy of mine heart: thou art mine hope and refuge in the day of my trouble *g*. *g* ps. 55. 16

But forasmuch as yet I am weak and of small power. I haue great need of thine assistance, & comfort: where-

H.

fore

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h ps. 106. 4 fore visite mee oftener h, and schoole me with holy discipline.

Set mee free from wicked affections of the mind, and heale my soule of all vnbridled desires, and sins; that being inwardly healed, and purged throughly, I may be made fit to loue,

ip sal. 13. 4 strong to suffer, and constant to continue. Amen.

CHAP. VII.

Ro. 8. 35

1 Cor. 13. 1

b The force

power of true loue

you may

behold as in

a glass, Ro.

8. 35. &c.

& 14. 1. &c.

& 15. 1. &c.

1 Cor. 13

1. &c.

2 Tim. 1. 5

2 Pet. 1. 5

1 Ioh. 2. 7

1 Ioh. 4. 7

Act. 2. 42

44. &c.

The praise and force of
godly loue.

Loue is a great thing, doubtles
Loue is an excellent thing; it
can make that which is heavy light;
& cary that equally which is vnequall.
It beareth a burden and feeleth it not;
and conuerteth all sowre things into
sweet and saourie: I say that noble
loue of Iesus, driueth one to aduen-
ture great things, and forceth alwaies
to come vnto perfection b.

Loue will be aboue, and cannot be
kept downe by any abiect thinge.
Loue will be free, and loose from all
worldly affections, that neither her
inward sight bee dimmed, nor shce be
either

of the Imitation of Christ.

either intangled by worldly prosperitie, or subdued by aduersity. Loue is most sweete, most strong, most high, most large, most comfortable, most perfect: nothing is better than loue, either in heauen above, or in earth beneath. For it ariseth from God *d*, and resteth on God about all things. *d i Ioh. 4*
7. 16

He that loueth, lieth, runneth, reioyceth, is free and cannot be bound; he giueth all for all, & hath all in all, as hee which resteth in one about all which is most high *e*, from whom every good thing doth spring, and arise *f*. Hee respecteth not gifts, but looketh on the giuer about all. *e i Ioh. 2*
5. 8cc. *f Iam. 1. 17*

Loue knoweth no measure, but burneth about measure. Loue fees no burden, weighs no labour, contendeth about strength, and considers not whether a thing may be done or no, for it counteth nothing hard, or impossible. Therefore loue can do all things: and hee that loueth, brings many things to passe, if he faist and lieth not.

Loue waketh, and sleeping, slumbereth not, laboring, tires not; loath, falseth not, terrifieth, dismayeth not, but as a quicke flame, and
H a. bur.

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burning torch breaketh forth vpward,
and lately pearceth out.

Hee that loueth, knoweth what this
meaneth. A great cry in the eares of
God, is the ardent affection of the
minde, while it saies; O my God, my
loue, thou art all mine, I am wholly
thine, Raise vp in mee a vehement
loue, that I may taste g with the in-
ner mouth of mine heart, how sweet
it is to loue, and to swim as it were in
the streames of loue.

g Ps. 34. 8

h Psal. 18. 1
Psal. 119
97. 103

Grant that I may so burne in loue,
that through the heate of desire, I
may exceede my selfe h; that I may
sing the ballad of loue, follow thee
my louer aloft, & set forth thy praises
with such a zeale, that euen my heart
may faint againe: that I may loue thee
more than my selfe: yea, neither loue
my selfe, nor any other that loue thee
vnsainedly, but in thee, and for thee,
euen as the law of loue that shineth
out of thee commaundeth and doth
require.

1 Co. 13. 5

Loue is swift, sincere, godly, plea-
sant and fruitfull, it is strong, patient,
faithful, wise, long suffering, & manly,
loue seeketh not her own. For there
loue perisheth, where any serueth him-
selfe.

Loue

of the Imitation of Christ.

Loue is circumspect, modest, iust, not dainty, not light, not giuen to vanities: but sober, chaste, constant, quiet, and temperate in all the senses.

Loue obeyeth betters, despiseth it selfe, feareth, thanketh, trusteth, and hopeth alwaies in God, yea when God seemes to abhorre it *k.*

For with-

He that is not prepared to suffer all *out paine,* things, and to yeeld himselfe to the *none liue* pleasure of his friend, is vnworthy to *in loue.* be called a friend.

To conclude, a friend must receiue all, euen hard and bitter things, in good part for his friends sake, and neuer leaue him in the time of aduersitie *l.*

1 Ro. 5. 7. 8

CHAP. VIII.

How to try a true friend: also how to resist the enemy.

LORD.

MY Sonne, as yet thou art not a stout, and prudent lover.

SERVANT. Why Lord?

LORD. Forasmuch as a little as *1 Joh. 4* saith makes thee to leaue off *and 18*

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ouer-greedily thou seekest cōsolatiō.

A valiant louer endureth tentations, and giueth no care to the subtile perswasions of the enemie; and therefore hee so liketh prosperity, that with ad-

6 Psal. 19.8 uersitie he will not be troubled 6.

Act. 2.24

A wise louer respecteth not so much the gift of the louer, as the loue of the giuer; hee looketh more on the minde, than on the thing; and weigheth no gift in respect of his friend.

The noble louer resteth not in the gift, but in me above all gifts.

Neither must thou by and by bee out of heart, though sometime thou thinke not so reuerently, as thou wouldest, either of mee, or my seruants.

That good and sweete affection, wherewith thou art delighted now and then, is an affection of present fauour, and a certaine fore-taste of the celestiall countrie: on which fore-taste thou must not too much depend, because it altereth many times. But to strue against the wicked motions of the minde, and to despise the intisements of Satan, is doubtlesse a valiant exploit, highly pleasing God.

1 Pet. 5

8.9

So that no cause is there why these absurd

of the Imitation of Christ.

absurd imaginations, which are wont to arise of every trifling occasion, should so torment thee: persevere constantly in thy purpose *d*, and serve *d* Psal. 25. 2
God with an upright affection. Psal. 27. 14

Neither is it an illusion, that thou suddenly sometimes art ravished up on hie, and by and by cast down vnto the old vanities of the mind *e*: which *e* 2 Cor. 12
for asmuch as thou sufferest them rather against thy will *f*, than willingly, *f* Rom. 7
as long as they displease thee, & thou 17. & c.
strugglest against them, they are rather profitable then hurtfull.

Know this for a certainty, the drift of the olde enemy, is to hinder thy study of godliness, and to withdraw thee from all exercise of religion, *g* 1 Pet. 5. 8
that is to say, from the godly remembrance of the paines of Christ, from the care of thy saluation, and from thy purpose to goe forward in well-doing *h*. *h* Mat. 13.

Many wicked cogitations doth the enemy bring into thy mind, to make thee to loath and abhorre prayer, and the reading of the holy Scriptures, *i* Mat. 13. 6
Hee cannot abide an humble confession of sinnes: and if hee could, hee would withdrawe thee also from the communion, *i* 25. 26.

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But beleene him not, though many times he lay snares to intrap thee, care not for him. Turne them vpon his owne pate, wen hee prouoketh thee to wickednesse, and say vnto him *k*; Auoid Satban, thou vncleane spirit, blush thou cursed wretch, thou which puttst these things into my head, auoid I say; thou wouldest carry mee away from my God, but thou shalt not. For Iesus will assist me, and so thou shalt but get a shamefull foile. I had rather die, and suffer any thing, than consent to thee *l*. Wherefore be quiet and holde thy peace: for I will not heare thee, though thou trouble mee neuer so much *m*. The Lord is my light, and my saluation *n*, whom shall I feare? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be affraid; Though an host pitched against mee mine heart should not bee affraid, the Lord protecting, and safely deliuering me.

Thou therefore strue couragiously as a good Souldier *o*: and if at any time of infirmitie thou fall, take a better heart vnto thee, & doubt not *p* of mine especiall fauour *p*: and in any wise beware of pride, and arrogancy, a cause why many are led into error, and

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and fall into blindness almost incurable many times q.

q Ro. 1. 21

Let the fall of those proud ones, 24. &c. foolishlie arrogating too much to themselves r, be a continuall warning to thee to beware of pride.

r Rom. 12. 19. 20

1-Pet. 5. 5

Lu. 18. 14.

Esa. 14. 10

11. &c.

2-Pet. 2. 3

CHAP. IX.

Of modest concealing the benefits of God.

LORD.

SONNE, it is good and profitable for thee to keep close the zeale of religion that God hath given thee; not to commend the same too insolently with words, or to praise it out of measure; but rather to despise thy selfe, and as one vnworthy those so excellent gifts to feare s.

s Rom. 11

20.

Thou must not stick too much to that affection which may easily be changed into the contrary.

1 Cor. 4

6. 7

Thinke while thou hast the fauour of God, how miserable & wretched thou shouldest bee without his fauour b: and thinke not that thy coming forward in godliness consisteth onely in hauing the benefite of Gods

b Rom. 5

1. 2. &c.

1 Co. 15. 10

Eph. 3. 7

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heavenly comfort, but also if thou canst patiently, and quietly endure **e Rom. 5. 3** the want thereof, in such sort that **James 1. 2.** thou faint not in prayer, nor omit altogether thine accustomed exercises, but as well as thou canst, discharge that which is in thee to doe, and neglect not thy duty for the vnquietnesse of minde which thou feelest in thy selfe.

For many, when things fall not out euen as they would haue them, are by and by either impatient, or carelesse **d Luk. 8. 13**.

It is not alwayes in the power of man to dispose his affaires at his pleasure, but God it is that both giueth **e Ier. 10. 23** and comforteth **f Phi. 2. 13** both when hee will **Ro. 9. 16** and what he will, and whom hee will, and as he will himselfe.

Some through a blinde deuotion haue cast themselves away, whilst endeavouring aboue their strength, they consider not the corruption of their nature, but follow the affection of their mind, rather then the iudgement of reason: the which, because they tooke in hand more then Gods will was they should, did quickly forgo the fauor of God: and they which made their nests in heauen, became poore,

Chap. 9. 131 Pride, mother of perdition
of the Imitation of Christ.

poore, vile, and forsaken, that the afflicted & poore might learne not to flie with their owne wings, but with my feathers. g Esa. 14
10. 11. &c.
Lu. 1. 51. 52

And for such as are but yonglings and not trained vp in the feare of the Lord, they (yuleis they harken to the counsel of the wise) may easily be deceived and ouerthrowne. h Pro. 12. 1
and 13. 1
14. 18 yea, if they follow their owne braine before such as haue experience, they are in the greater danger, because they will not be withdrawn from their opinion once conceiued. i Pr. 2. 1. 29

It is seldome scene that selfe-wise men will yeeld to any.

And therefore, better it is to haue small wisdom with modestie, than profound knowledge with a proude mind: yea, better it is to haue little, than hauing much to waxe proud. k Pro. 11. 2
& 15. 25

Hee dealeth not circumspectly enough, that giues himselfe wholly vnto pleasure, forgetting his olde aduersitie, and the chaste feare of the Lord, the proper tie whereof is to be alwaies warie that it these not bene. l Rom. 1. 20 his receiued.

And he is not veruously wise, that in the time of misery despaireth ouermuch, and repositeth lesse confidence and

and trust in mee, than he should. Hee
which in time of peace is too secure,
in the time of warre is out of heart
commonly, and of no courage.

Haddest thou the way to behaue
thy selfe modestly, and lowly, and
to gouerne thy spirits aright, thou
couldst not so easily fall into perill,
and blame.

It is a point of wisdom, while thou
art hot in the spirit, to consider what
would fall out, if the light should goe
away: and againe when thar comes
to passe, to think that it may returne
again; being therefore withdrawne
by me, that both you thereby may be
the wiser, and the more glorious.

For commonly thou shalt find such
triall more profitable, then if con-
tinually thou enioyedst prosperity at
thine hearts desire.

For thou art not vertuous though
thou haue heauenly visions, and con-
solations, learning and high degree,
vntill thou haue true modesty,
Christian charity, and zeale of re-
ligion, vntill thou vnsainedly de-
spise thy selfe, and reioyce that others
doe despise, & contemne, rather than
honour and commend thee.

CHAP. X.

*That man must debase himselfe in
the sight of God.*

SERVANT.

I Dare speak vnto my Lord, though
I am but dust and ashes *a*: and if I *a* Ge. 18.2
should make any better of my selfe,
thou standest against me, and my sins
beare witnesse against me *b*, which I *b* Iob 9.20
cannot gaine-say. 30.31

But If I make none account of my
selfe, but laying aside proud imagi-
nations *c*, esteeme my selfe for dust, *c* Lu. 18.13
as I am indeede, then wilt thou bee *d* Lam. 4.6
fauourable, and thy light shall shine *e* 1 Pet. 5.5
vpon mine heart: then will it fall out, *f* Pro. 3.34
that if I esteeme neuer so little of
my selfe, even that little, I being pre-
sed downe to nothing, will vanish vt-
terly.

And heere thou wilt shewe mee to
my selfe, euen what I am, what I haue
beene, and whence I came; to witte,
nothing from nothing. And being
left to my selfe *d*, I am nothing but *d* Psal. 8.4
meere infirmitie. Psal. 39.9

But if thou shine vpon me with thy *f* Gen. 1.7
fauour

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ePsa. 134 30 fauor, I am straightway made strong e, and filled with new comfort.

And this is a wonderfull strange thing, that so suddenly I should bee lifted vp, when thou doost so gratiouſly embrace me, which of my ſelfe

fWiſ. 9. 15 alwaies am carried downward f vnto Rom. 7 earthly things. This is a fruit of thy

23. 24 loue, which freely preuenteth mee g,

gPſa. 3. 9 and ſaueth from ſo many troubles h,

10 & preſerueth from grievous dangers,

hPſa. 89 and deliuereth me (to ſay the truth)

1. & c. from ſo infinite euils.

Pſa. 49. 16 For, louing my ſelfe inordinately,

hLu. 15. 13 I caſt away my ſelfe i: but after once

iLu. 15. 21 I ſought, and loued thee ſincerely, I

both found thee, and my ſelfe k, and

by that loue alſo I brought my ſelfe

the more to nothing.

For thou, O my ſweet Sauior, thou

1Pſa. 89. 1 haſt ſhewed me things vpon me l, than

& c. I can deſerue, and a great deale more

than I dare hope for, much leſſe de-

ſire.

Wherefore I thanke thee my God,

which albeit I am vnworthie the leaſt

of all thy bleſſings; yet of thy honor

mMat. 5 and infinite goodnes, ceaſeſt not con-

15 tinually to loadē euen the vngrate-

Luk. 18. 13 full n, and thine enemies with bene-

14 fits. O Lord, thou which art our ſal-

uation,

of the Imitation of Christ.

uation *n*, our strength and our shield, *n*Exo. 15. 2
 conuert vs, we beseech thee, that wee *2* Sa. 12. 2
 may prooue gratefull, humble, and *Psal.* 18. 2
 godly in thy sight, Amen. *Elc.* 33. 2

CHAP. XI.

*That all things are directed vnto God,
 as to the principall end.*

LORD.

SONNE, if thou desire to bee
 happy, thou must make mee thy
 chiefest and principall end *a*. *Ro.* 11. 36

Heereby shall thy nature bee puri-
 fied *b*, which most cōmonly bendeth *b* Gen 6. 5
 vnto it selfe, & vnto things created. *Gen.* 8. 21

For as soon as thou seekest thy selfe
 in any thing *c*, by & by thou faintest, *c* Mat. 15. 2
 and witherest in thy selfe. *1 Cor.* 13

And therefore thou must referre all *18. 19*
 things to mee alone, which gaue all
d, and send all, therefore vnto mee *d* Ia. 1. 17
 as to the chiefe spring, all things must
 returne *e*. *Rom.* 11

Out of mee the small as well as the *36.*
 great, the poore as well as the rich, do
 drawe the water of life *f*, as from a *f* *Pla.* 39. 9
 liuely fountaine: and they which *Esay* 12. 3.
 frankie and willinglie serue mee, *Ioh.* 4. 10
 they

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they shall receiue one benefite vpon
 g Iob. 1. 12. another g. But if any will glorie or
 delight in any priuate thing besides
 h Ier. 9. me h, hee at no time shall feelee true
 23. 24. ioy, and comfort in his minde, but
 1 cor. 1. 31 fall into sundry discommodities, and
 2 Cor. 10 troubles.

17. 18 Therefore thou must ascribe no
 goodnesse, nor godlinesse neither to
 thy selfe, nor to any mortall man, but
 1 cor. 3. 6 all to God k, without whose blessing
 1 cor. 1. 38. man hath nothing k.

k Iam. 1. 17 I gaue all, I challenge all of right,
 1 Cor. 4. 7 and I look to be glorified for all l.

l Ro. 11. 36 This is the truth, whereby the vaine
 glory of man is put to flight.

And who so hath the fauour of God,
 m Ro. 5. 3 and true charitie m, hee is neither en-
 and 8. 35 uious nor faint-hearted, nor proud n.
 n 1 cor. 13 For heauenly loue subdueth all things
 4. 8c. and stretcheth forth all the powers of
 o Ro. 8. 37 the minde o.

1 cor. 13. 7 Wherefore, if thou beest wise, thou
 wilt reioyce and trust in mee alone, e-
 p Ier. 9. 17 uen as God alone is good p, who a-
 q 1 Ti. 1. 17 boue all, and in all is to be praised for
 2 Ti. 6. 16. euermore q. Amen.

CHAP. XII.

That it is a sweet thing to serue God
and to despise the world.

SERVANT.

O LORD, I will speake againe,
I cannot hold my peace : and in
the eares of my God, my Lord, and
my King dwelling in the hie hea-
uens, this I say, O Lord, how great is
thy goodnes, which thou hast laid vp Pl. 31. 19
euen for them which feare thee !
Much more then for them which loue
thee, yea much more for them which
honour thee with all their hearts.

Trulie vnspeakeable is the sweet-
nes of thy contemplation, which thou Esa. 64. 4
impartest on such which loue thee 1 cor. 2. 9

And heerein chiefly thou declar-
edst the force of thy loue, in that Gen. 2. 7.
when I was not, thou madest mee Iob. 10
and after when I went astray, thou 8. 9. &c.
broughtest mee home againe, & com- psa. 19.
mandedst that I should serue 2., and
loue thee.

O fountaine of euerlasting loue,
what shall I say of thee ? or how can I
forget thee, that hast vouchsafed to
remem-

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remember me? who beyond all hope
 hast been mercifull to mee thine own,
 Eph. 2.5 euen when I was dead e, and cast a-
 way, and at such time as I deserued
 nought, didst bind me vnto thee tho-
 rough thy fauour and friendship.

Now what shall I render for this
 pps. 116.12 thy bountifullnesse? Surely I will
 serue thee g. But that is no great
 thing to serue him, whom all crea-
 g ma. 28.18 tures of duty must obey g. This 12-
 1co. 1.5.27 ther is wonderful & strange, that thou
 Heb. 2.8 vouchsafest to take & admit so vile a
 wretch as I am, into thy seruice a-
 bro. 11.17 mong the number of thy beloued h.

Loe, whatsoeuer I haue to do thee
 i Math. 25 seruice withall, it is thine i. But what?
 14.15 me thinks thou seruest me, more than
 1 Cor. 4.7 I thee. For behold, heauen and earth,
 k Psa. 8.3 which thou hast made for the vse of
 4. &c. man k, are present, and continuallie
 1 Psalm. 8 discharge the duty which thou hast
 7. &c. enioyned them l. Yea the Angels also
 m psa. 34.7 thou hast created, and ordained for
 mat. 18.10 the vse of man m. But of all other
 heb. 1.14 things this is most wonderfull, that
 Mat. 20 thou wouldest debase thy selfe so
 28. much as to serue man n, and hast pro-
 Mar. 10.46 mised to giue thy selfe for him o.

For these thy benefits what shall I
 ioh. 6.51 render vnto thee p? O that I could
 pps. 116.12 serue

Chap. 12. 139. *Serue God and be honorable
of the Imitation of Christ.*

serue thee all my life long; Yea wold
to God I could serue thee euen one
day sincerely. Truly thou art wor-
thy all seruice, all honour, euerlasting
praise *g.* Doubtes thou art my Lord, *91 Ti. 1. 17*
and I am thy poore seruant *r.*, bound *r Lu. 17. 10*
to serue thee with all my strength *s.*, *s Lu. 10. 27*
and to sing out thy prayes without
ceasing *t.* And surely so I will, or *r Deut. 6. 5*
would at least wise; but what I can- *& 11. 18*
not, supply thou, O Lord, of thy *19. 20*
goodnesse.

A great honour, a great preferment
it is to bee thy seruant, and to con-
temne worldly things for thy sake *u.* *Mat. 10*
For great shall be their reward which *37. &c.*
voluntarily submit themselves to this *Ioh. 12. 25*
holy seruice *x.*; and they shall feele *x Mat. 5*
the sweete comfort of thy holy Spi- *11. 12*
rit, who through the loue of thee *Rom. 8*
haue despised the pleasures of this *35. &c.*
present worldy. Great freedome of *y 1 cor. 10*
minde shall they come vnto, which *3. 4*
entring into the narrow way *z.*, haue *z Mat. 7.*
cast aside worldly cares, and cogitati- *13. 14*
ons *a.* *Luk 13. 24*

O how sweete and comfortable is
the seruice of God, whereby a man *a Mat. 5. &c.*
is made free, and holy *b.* O the holy *b Ro. 8. 15*
state of Gods seruants, which maketh
men equall to Angels *c.*, acceptable *c Heb. 1. 14*

The third booke

d Mat. 5.3 to God d, to the diuels terrible e, and
&c. honourable among the faithfull! O
e Ma. 10.8 noble seruice, and alwaies to bee wi-
A&.19.1 shed for, whereby both the chiefest
f Ec. 10.20 felicity is gotten, & ioy without end
24.25 obtained g.

g Io. 12.25

Ioh. 17

CHAP. XIII.

That the desires of the minde must bee
examined and bridled.

LORD.

MY Sonne thou hast yet many
things to learne.

SERVANT. What are those
Lord?

LORD. That thou make thy de-
sire obedient to my commandement,
and be no more a friend to thy selfe,
but desirous to obserue my will a.

a Lu. 22.

42. &c.

Ioh. 4.24

& 5.30

b Lu. 22

24

Ioh. 5.44

Ioh. 14. 4.6

c Lu. 9.23

&c. 49.61

Luk. 18.22

23

Many times thou art enflamed,
and vehemently driuen on through
desires: and when thou art so, consi-
der with thy selfe, whether thou seeke
more my praise than thy profit b. For
if thou couet a thing for my sake, thou
wilt take in good part that which I
shall lend; but if couetousnes cause
the same, then art thou kept back, and
pressed downe c.

Wherefore take heede that thou
leane

leane not too much to thy conceined
desire, I not being of counsell d, least d Pr. 3. 5.7
afterward thou buy it full dearely;
and that at another time displease
thee, which at the first thou didst like
and lond for e. For euery affection e Lu. 9. 59
that seemeth good, must not be fol- 61.
lowed, nor the contrarie suddenly a. Luk. 18. 18
uoyded.

Sometime it is good to bridle euen
good motions & desires, least either
thou passe thy boundes through im-
portunitie of minde, or offend others
through thine intemperancy, or thou
suddenly fal through the resistance of
them.

Otherwhiles it is expedient to vse
violence f; and to resist the appetite, f Mat. 11
and not weigh what the flesh either 12
likes or mislikes g: but rather to vse g Gal. 5. 16
digence, that it be constrained to o- 17 &c.
bey the spirit, and so long be kept vn- Rom. 6. 12
der in bondage till it be pliant vnto Ro. 8. 12
all things, and haue learned to bee
content with a little, & simple estate,
and neuer to murmur for any afflic-
tion.

CHAP. XIII.

The way to patience, and to fight against fleshly desires.

SERVANT.

THEN my Lord, and God, as farre as I percelue, I haue much need of patience. *a.* For many contrarie things happen in this life: inſomuch, that albeit I deſire quietneſſe by all meanes, yet it is impoſſible for me to live without war and trouble *b.*

a. Lu. 21.19

b. Job 7.1

Job. 16.20

22

LORD. Thou ſaiſt true my Son. Yet will I not haue thee to ſeek after that peace which is without tentations & troubles: but then to thinke thou haſt found peace, when thou ſhalt be tried with manifold miſeries and vexations *c.*

c. Ia. 1.2.3

1 Pet. 1.6.7

Now if thou ſay, thou canſt not ſuffer much, tell me, my Sonne, how then wilt thou ſuſter the euerlaſting torments of hell fire *d.* Of two evils alwaies the leſſer muſt bee choſen. Wherefore to auoid thoſe euerlaſting paines, ſtrive to endure the miſeries of this preſent world patiently for the Lords ſake *e.*

d. Mat. 7.23

and 25. 41

e. Mat. 5

10. 33

1 Pet. 4. 14

Thinkeſt

Thinkest thou that the men of this world feele either none aduersitie, or but little? If thou doost, thou art in a wrong opinion, for they which liue most delicately, liue in misery f. f Ge. 3. 10.

But thou wilt say: They haue their 11. 17
delights, & they follow their fantasies, Iob. 12. 1
and therefore they bee little touched &c.
with their miseries. Well, suppose e-
very thing fals out according to their
wish; how long will that last g? Vere. g Luk. 12.
ly, euen as smock shall they consume 10. 45. 46
away h, which are wealthy in this i Thel. 5. 2
world; so that of ioyes passed, there h Pl. 37. 20
shall be no remembrance k. 2. 9. 13. &c.

Yea, while they liue too, they inioy i Lu. 6. 14
them not without sorrow, trouble, & 2. 5. 26.
feare. For of what things they take k Pl. 37. 9
pleasure, of the same they receiue 10. 20. &c.
sorrow many times. And deseruedlie.
For they which beyond reason folow
vaine delights, euen reason would
that they should not haue them with-
out paine, and griefe l. And, their l pr. 14. 13.
pleasures too, are but very short, and
deceitfull, and dishonest, and filthy i
But this they perceiue not, they are
so drunken and blinde: but like brute
beasts, for a little pleasure in this
world, they cast their soules into c. m Pl. 49
uerlasting paines m. 11. 13. &c.

Where.

The third booke

- Wherefore my sonne, follow not
 • Eccl. 18 thou thy lusts, but renounce thine
 30.31 owne will. Delight thy selfe in the
 Gal. 5.16 Lord, and hee will giue thee thine
 &c. hart's desire.
 • Luk. 9 For, knowe this for a truth, if thou
 23.&c. wouldest truly reioyce, and receiue
 p Psal. 37.4 much comfort at mine hands, thou
 must vterly despise all worldlie
 things, and contemne those vaine de-
 lights. For, therein true felicitie &
 ample reward of comfort doth con-
 sist. And the more thou withdrawest
 thy selfe from worldly pleasure, the
 sweeter consolations shalt thou finde
 in me. But as I said before, thou shalt
 not attaine thereunto without sorow
 and labour.
 For there is against thee old cu-
 stomes, but that will bee foyled by a
 better custome: the flesh, but that wil
 bee bridled by the heate of the Spi-
 rit: the olde serpent Satan, but hee
 both at thy prayer will flie, and by
 godly exercise run away.
 • Rom. 8
 1.&c.
 Ga. 5.16.17
 • 2CO. 11.9
 Reue. 12
 12.17
 • 1 Pet. 5
 8.9.
 Mat. 26.41

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of obedience to our betters, after the
example of Christ.

LORD.

Sonne, hee that withdraweth him-
selfe from obedience, driueth
himselfe out of Gods fauour ^{a Deu. 11. 1}
and he that seeketh priuate, forgoeth ^{Deu. 21. 18}
publike things. ^{19. &c.}

He which gladly, and voluntarily
obeyeth not his better, sheweth ^{b Eph. 6. 6}
plainely thereby, that hee hath not yet ^{Colo. 3. 23}
brought his flesh in subiection, but
that it winneth backward, and mur-
mureth many times ^{c Ti. 2. 2. 3.}

Wherefore learne with all speed to
submit thy selfe to thy superiour ^{d 1 Per. 1}
if thou desire to tame thy flesh ^{e 13. 14}
For, the outward enemy is the more ea-
sily overcome, if the inner man bee ^{f 1pc. 2. 11}
sure and strong ^{f Ma. 26. 41}

Thou hast none so ill, and trouble-
some an enemy to thy soule, as thy ^{Luk. 22}
selfe, if thou bee without the spirit ^{40. 46.}
g. ^{Gal. 5. 16}
For thou must vnfaignedly contemne
thy selfe; if thou wilt bee master ouer
bloud and flesh. But forasmuch as
thou louest thy selfe yet immode-
rately

The third booke

ately, thou abhorrest to commit thy
 self wholly to the will of another *h*.

But O earth and ashes *i*, what great

thing doest thou; if for the Lords

sake thou obey man *h*, when I the al-

mighty & most hie, who of nothing

created all things *i*, submitted my selfe

humbly to man for thy sake, and was

most vile and contemptible *m*, that

thou by mine humility mightest o-

uercome that pride of thine *n*?

Learne to obey, O dust *o*; learne to

bring downe thy selfe, O earth, and

slime *p*, and to throw downe thy selfe

vnder all mens feet. Learne, I say, to

breake thy will, and humbly to sub-

mit thy selfe to all *q*. Wax hot against

thy selfe, and suffer not pride to haue

place within thee, but shew thy selfe

so lowly and simple, that all may tread

thee vnder feete like mire in the

streets *n*.

What hast thou, O vaine man, to

complaine? How canst thou, O wic-

ked wretch, speake of mine to them

which dispraise thee, being so often-

times by offending God, thou hast

deserued the paines of hell *f*?

But

gratiously haue spared thee *t*, making

no small account of thy saule, thou

thou perceiuing this my loue to thee

ward

Chap. 16 147 To feare God is great wisdom
of the Imitation of Christ.

wards, mightest alwaies shewe thy
selfe thankfull for my benefits &, and w^{pl.} 116.13
euermore being giuen to true obedi- 13.17
ence, and modesty &, take it patiently & 1 pt. 1.17
when thou art contemned. 71 Pet. 2
20. &c.

CHAP. XVI.

That we are to consider the secret iudge-
ments of God, least we waxe proud
in his gifts.

SERVANT.

O Lord, when thou thunderest
foorth thy iudgements against
mee, thou makest all my members
shake and quake for feare, and terri-
fiest my minde aboue measure &. 1 Ioh. 4.17
Astonished I consider that the ve- 18.19
ry heauens are not cleane in thy sight Psa. 6.1. &c
&. And if thou foundest folly in thine 38.1.2. &c
Angels, and therefore diddest not Iob. 15.17
spare them, what shall become of & Iob. 40.1
mee &? If the very starres did fall 19
from heauen &, what shall I that am & Esa. 14.1
but ashes and dust & hope for? They & Ec. 10.12
whose workes seemed commenda- f Mar. 1.1
ble, haue viterly beene confounded 20. &c.
& and such as were fedde with the Mat. 23.2
bread of Angels, I haue serue to bee &c.

The third booke

delighted with the huskes that swine
g Lu. 15. 16 eat g.

So that there is none holinesse, if
thou, Lord, draw back thine hand: no
wisdomes helpeeth, if thou governe
b 1 Cor. 1 not h: no strength doth good, if thou
17. &c. assist not, no chastitie is sure, if thou
defend not, & no custodie can keepe
i psal. 127. 1 safe if thou watch not i.

For being forsaken, alas, we drown
k Mat. 5. 29 and perish k: but if thou care for vs,
Luk 8. 24 we liue and prosper: Wee are of our
selues fraile, but strong through thee,
& of our selues neither hot nor colde,
i Lu. 17. 5 but zealous through thee l.

Doubtles it is my part to conceiue
most humbly, and basely of my selfe:
and though I seeme to haue some
goodnesse, yet must I not weigh the
m Luk, 18. lame m. I say, it is my part to submit
11. &c. my selfe to those bottomlesse iudge-
1 cor. 4. 7 ments of thine n, seeing I finde my
n Psal. 119 selfe to be no better than nothing of
7. 30. 32 nothing.

O weight without measure! O Sea
o Psal. 36. 6 vnpassable n, where I find my selfe to
be nothing but altogether nothing.
Where is then the couert of glorie?
Where is the vaine conceit of glorie?
p Psal. 9. 16 All vaine glorie is swallowed vp in
& 115. 120 the gulfe p of thy iudgements ouer
me

Chap. 17. 149 *A godly man is not vainglorious
of the Imitation of Christ.*

me. What are all men in thy sight? E-
uen as clay in respect of the potter 9 *Esa. 29*

Can hee waxe proude with vaine 18
praises, whose mind is truly obedient
to the Lord? No, though all the world
should extoll him, seeing he is in ser-
uice to the truth: he will not be mo-
ued 7, with their commendations, 7 *Ier. 9. 23*

whose trust is fixed vpon the Lord, 24
For euen they all, who utter his pray-
ses, are nothing, and together with *psa. 89. 48*
the sound of their words, shall vanish *Psa. 49. 10*
away 5. But the truth of the Lord en- *Esa. 40. 8*
dureth for euer 1. *Pla. 117. 2*

CHAP. XVII.

*What words, and manner we should vse
in desiring any thing at the
hands of God.*

LORD.

SOme, in thy prayers thou must
vse these words.

Lord bee it euen so, if it
please thee 2. Lord, if it be for the 7 *Iam. 4. 15*
advancement of thy glorie, let it be *Act. 18. 21*
done in thy name. Lord, if thou 7 *Cor. 4. 10*
seest it good, and profitable for me, *Mat. 6. 19*
grant that I may vie it to thine honor & *26. 39*
& praise: but if thou knowest it will be 41

hurtfull, O Lord remoue away this
b Iam. 4. 3 desire fro me b.

For euery desire which seemeth
sight and good in the iudgement of
man, is not of the holy Spirit, and it
is an hard matter to discerne rightly
whether a good or an euill spirit doth
prouoke thee to couet this or that, or
whether thine owne spirit moue thee
c 1 co. 2. 11 thereunto. Many in the end haue
beene deceiued, who seemed to bee
stirred vp by a good spirit.

And therefore alwaies thou must
wish for that, which thou wouldest
haue, in the feare of God, and with
d Psal. 19. 7 humblenes of mind d, and commit
Psal. 111. 5 the whole matter to the Lord, with a
Pro. 1. 28 merre check to thy selfe, saying on
29 this wise;

Lord, what is better for mee thou
knowest, doe thou whether of both
e Mat. 8. 2 thou wilt thy selfe e. Giue mee what
Mar. 14. 36 thou wilt, as much as thou wilt, and
when thou wilt thy selfe. Deale with
mee as thou thinkest good, and as it
shall please thee, and bee most for thy
glory. Place mee there where thou
f Psal. 21. 6 wilt thy selfe, and in all things vlc me
g Psal. 116 at thy pleasure. I am in thine hand f,
16 turne me, loose mee euery way. Be-
Lu. 1. 38 hold, I thy seruant g am prepared to
all

all things, becaule my desire is to (&
would to God I could right'y, and
perfectly) serue thee, not my selfe *b. b Ro. 14.8*
Phil. 1.20

CHAP. XVIII.

*A prayer for grace to doe the will
of GOD.*

SERVANT.

O Most bountifull Sauour extend
thy fauour towards mee *a*, let it
bee with mee, and labour with mee,
and continue vntill the end *b*. *a Psam. 80*
b Phil. 2.10

Giue mee grace to wish, and couer
such things *c*; as may bee gratefull to
thee, and acceptable in thy sight. *c Phil. 2.13*

Let thy wil be my wil, and let mine
alwaies follow thine, and agree there-
with *d*. *d Mar. 6.10*
& 26.39

Grant that I may like and dislike
that which thou doest *e*; and neither
like or dislike any thing, but that
which thou doest either like or mi-
like. *e Mar. 14.36*
& Iohn 4
34 & 30
and 6.38

Assist me to crucifie my selfe to all
worldly things *f*; and for thy sake to
couer in this world to bee contemned
and vnknewne. *f Gal. 6.14*
Rom. 6.1
3 &c.

And aboue all things grant that I *Phil. 3.8*

*Contemne this world, but
desire heauen.*

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Chap. 19

The third booke

2 Phi. 4. 6
h Ioh. 14
27. & 16.
33.

i Psa. 3. 5
and 4. 8

may rest and haue peace in thee : thou
art the true peace , thou alone art the
quietnes of mind g. Without thee
all things are hard and troublefom h.
In this peace ; that is in thee alone,
which ~~is~~ ^{is} rest, and euerlasting
felicitie i. ~~with thee~~ ^{in thee}, and take my rest

i. Amen.

CHAP. XIX.

*That the true comfort is to be sought for
in God alone.*

SERVANT.

* Rom. 8
18. 32

1 cor. 2. 9

Heb. 13. 14

b Ioh. 16

20. 22

e 1 co. 7. 31

i Ioh. 2. 17

1 cor. 1. 31

2 cor. 1. 3. 4

d 2 cor. 7. 6

e Iam. 4. 6.

V Whatſoeur pleasure I can
wish, or imagine , I looke
not for it in this life , but in the world
to come.

If I alone had all the pleasures that
might be, and enoyed all the de-
light in the world, certaine it is they
would not long endure b.

And therefore thou canst not fully
be delighted, and refreshed through-
ly (o my soule) but in the Lord e, who
comforteth the abiect d, and assisteth
the mecke e.

Hope a little while , O my Soule,
hope for the promise of God , and
thou shalt attaine to plennie of all
good

f Psa. 27. 4.

good things in heauen. But if thou
vnmearably desire temporall things,
make an account of it thou shalt for-
goe eternall g.

g Luk. 16

Vse this world h, but desire hea-
uen.

2.25

1 Ioh. 2

No temporall thing can satisfie
thee i; for thou art not created to en-
ioy the same.

15. 16. 17.

h 1 Co. 7. 3

1 Col. 3. 1. 2.

Haddest thou all creatures in thine
owne possession, yet wext thou not and
blessed: But thy felicitie consisteth
in God the Creator of all l. Which is
such, not as is seen & commended of
the foolish fauourers of this present
world, but as the good and faithfull
disciples of Christ hope for, and they
sometime foretaste who are spirituall
and pure in heart m, whose conuer-
sation is in heauen n. Vaine is
all worldly consolation: but true and
blessed is the spirituall, in which the
truth doth minister.

k Eccle. 18.

4. 3

l Psal. 36

7. 8. 9. &

42. 1. &c

m Mat. 5. 8

n Psal. 24. 4

o Phil. 3. 9

p ps. 31. 19

The godly man carrieth alwayes
about his comforter, euen Iesu
whom on this wise hee speaketh vnto.

p 2 Cor. 1

2. 5

O Lord Iesu, bee with me in all
trials, and at all times. Let this be my
comfort, to lack all worldly comfort
willingly q; or if at any time I lack
thy consolation, let thy will and due

q Colo. 1. 3

r Iob. 6. 7

The third booke

1. pet. 1. 7 triall of me 7. bee in steede of chiefest
 of Psal. 3. 4. comfort. For thou wilt not alwaies
 chide, neither keepe thine anger for
 2. Psal. 10. euer.

3. 9.

CHAP. XX.

That all things must be cast vpon
 G.O.D.

LORD.

MY Son, let mee deale as I will
 1. Jam. 4. 7 with thee: I do knowe what
 is for thy profit. Thou conceiuest as
 2. psal. 94. 11 a man, and in many things doost so
 Mat. 16. 2; thinke, as thy fleshly mind doth coun-
 1. Cor. 3. 1. sell thee.

SERVANT. Truth Lord, thou
 1. Ps. 55. 21 hast more care of me, than I can haue
 Elz. 49. 14 of my selfe. For hee standeth totte-
 1. 5. ringle, who trusteth not whollie in
 1. 1. pet. 5. 7 thee.

O Lord, so that my will may bee
 right & grounded on thee, deale with
 1. Luk. 1. me euen as thou wilt. For it cannot
 38. bee but good whatsoeuer thou shalt
 determine of me.

Wherefore whether thou wilt that
 1. Ro. 12. 12 I bee in darknes, I praise it, or in the
 2. Cor. 6. 4. light, I praise it, whether in prosperi-
 2. 2. tie, I praise it, or in aduersity, I praise
 that

Chap. 21. 155 Depend wholly on the Ear
of the Imitation of Christ.

that also g.

g Psa. 34.1

LORD. Sonne thou must be so
minded, if thou deale with me: and
be as willing to suffer *h*, as to reioice; *h* Iam. 1.2
and to be poore, and needy, as rich Ioh 15.9
and wealthie. and 16.1

SERVANT. Lord, I wil gladly i Mat. 19.17
suffer for thy sake whatsoever thou Luk. 9.23
shalt send: yea, I will take in good & Phil. 4
part at thine hands euill as well as 4.5
good, sowre as sweet, sorrow as ioy, Col. 1.11
and for all things yeeld thanks. 12

Defend me, O Lord, from sin, and I. Thes. 5
I will feare neither death nor the de- 18
uill: and so thou forsake me not vtter-
ly, neither blot me out of the booke
of life, no miserie shall dismay &c.
me

CHAP. XXI.

*That the troubles of this life are patient-
ly to be suffered, after the example
of our Saviour Christ.*

LORD.

4 Iob. 3.13

M Y Son, for thy saluation I came and 6.33
down from heauen *a*, & tooke 28.&c.
thy miseries vpō me, not of necessity Phil. 1.7.3
b, but voluntarily, to teach thee to be 6 Eia. 5.15
patient,

The third booke

cient, and to beare the miseries of this world gladly *c*, not grudgingly.

e 1 Pet. 2
21. &c.

d Esa. 55. 2

Luk. 9. 22

e Luk. 27

Mat. 4. 2

Luk. 9. 58

f Ioh. 7. 12

g Mat. 12

24

Ioh. 8. 48

h Esa. 5. 1

&c.

Mat. 3. 1. 3

33. &c.

i Luk. 14

14. 15

k Ioh. 7. 28

30

Ioh. 17. 4

Phil. 2. 8

m 1 Pet. 2

21. &c.

n Ma. 11. 29

o Phi. 4. 13

He. 6. 11. 12

& 11. 32

33. &c.

p 1 Cor. 3

23. &c.

For from the houre of my birth *e*-
uen till my death on the crosse, there
neuer wanted sorrowes, which I was
to suffer *d*, I bare the want of necessa-
rie things *e*, I heard much muttering
against mee *f*. I put vp many taunts
and reproaches *g*, for my benefits I
receiued vnkindnes *h*, for my myra-
cles ill words *i* for my ghostly coun-
sell reprehension *k*.

SERVANT. O my Lord, seeing
thou in this life hast shewed thy selfe
patient (wherein especialy thou ful-
filledst the commandement of thine
heauenly father *l*;) good reason is it
that I a miserable and sinfull wretch
doe shew my selfe patient according
to thy will, and while thou thinkest
meete, beare the burden of mortall
life after thine example *m*.

For although this present life seem
burdensome, yer through thy fauour
it is made the lighter, and may the
more easily bee borne of weakelings
both by thine example *n*, and of thy
SAINTS.

Yea, much more comfortable is it
now, than it was in the old law, when
both the way was hard to finde, and
few

few had a desire to seeke the celestiall
kingdome q.

9 Ro. 9. 29

Then how much am I bound to 1 cor. 10. 6

thee, which hast vouchsafed to shewe
both to me & to all beleeuers, a right
and ready way vnto thine euerlasting
kingdome: For thy way is our way: r Ioh. 14. 6

& by holy patience we strue to come
vnto thee, our Crowne: whom, vn-

lesse thou haddest gone afore s, and s Ioh. 14

schooled vs: who would care to fol- 2. 19

low? how many would abide nor on- Ioh. 15. 18

ly behind, but a great way off also, if: Io. 16. 32

they had not these thy noble exam-
ples before their eyes?

And hearing such comandements
and signes, and yet are luke-warme:
what would we doe if we had not such
a light giuen to vs to follow thee?

CHAP. XXII.

Of Long suffering, and who is patient
indeed.

LORD.

Vhat is that thou sayest my s Heb. 12

Sonne? cease to complaine. s Heb. 11

Beholde how both I s, and other 32. &c.

Saints b haue suffered: Thou hast Heb. 6. 12

6 He. 12.4 not as yet resisted vnto blood.

Little is it which thou sufferest, being compared with them who haue suffered so much, so mightily beene tempted, so grievously afflicted, so many waies tried and exercised.

4 Heb. 11

34-35-36

37

And therefore call such into mind as haue endured more troubles: so shalt thou more easily beare thine owne. And if thine seeme not light, looke whether impatiencē doe not cause thee to thinke so: but bee they smal, be they great, indeauor thou to beare them patiently.

6 1 co. 6.4

Iam. 1.2.3

For the more patience thou shewst, the more wisely thou doest; the more fauour thou shalt get, the more easily thou shalt beare aduersity, being both in mind, and custome, not slothfully prepared hereunto.

FRo. 5.3-4

And say not, I neuer can nor may suffer this at his hands; for hee hath injured me greatly, and accused me of those things, which I neuer thought of: if any other had dealt so with me, I could yet haue put vp such things, as I see might reasonably be put vp. I say, vse not these speeches, for they are foolish cogitations, such as neither weigh the worthinesse of patience, nor the reward due for the same,

of the Imitation of Christ.

same g, but respect persons rather, g Ia. 1. 12
and iniuries received h. 6 Mat. 5

Hee is not a false patient, that will 43. 44. &c
bear but with whom he list, and what
hee list. But hee is patient indeed that
weigheth not who molesteth him,
whether his better or his equall, or
his inferior, whether he be good and
godly, or wicked & vngracious, and
howsoever he bee iniured, and when-
soever, hee taketh it in good part, as
sent from God, & puts it in his win-
nings: for the smallest thing that is
beeing suffered for Gods sake, shall
have a great reward. i Mat. 5.

Wherefore bee thou girded k unto 11. 12
the battell, if thou wilt have the victo- Rom. 8. 13
rie. Valesse thou strine, thou shalt ne. Phil. 1. 12
ner obtaine the crowne of patience. l. 13. &c.
So that, if thou wilt not suffer, thou k Eph. 6. 14
refusest to bee crowned, but if thou l 2 Ti. 2. 5
desire to bee crowned, strine manful-
lie, and suffer patiently the blow of
the battell m. For neither quietnesse m psal. 7. 14
without labour, nor victory without and 3 1. 24
fighting is obtained n. m 2. 1 1. 2. 5

SERVANT. O my Lord, grant
that through thine assistance I may
do that, which of my selfe me thinks
I cannot do o. Thou knowest that o. o 2 cor. 3. 5
therwise I can but suffer little, & even
by!

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by a small puffe of aduersitie, am easily ouerthrowne.

Grans that all troubles for thy name sake may bee welcome to me, and wished for: for to suffer, & to be afflicted for thee, is very good for my soules healeth p. Amen.

Iam. 1. 3. 3

CHAP. XXIII.

A confession of mans weakenesse and misery.

SERVANT.

I Will confesse my finnes and wickednes vnto thee, O Lord.

Oftentimes a small thing brings mee downe, and troubles me. Sometime I determine to play the stout champion: and by & by with a light tentation I am ouerthrowne. Now and then of a small thing ariseth a grieuous tentation, and when I think I am safe, vnawares many times I receiue the foile.

Wherefore Lord behold mine humility and frailty which is well knowne to thee. Haue mercy on me, and deliuer me out of this mire.

Pf. 61. 12

This doost vex me at the very hart

heart, and confounds mee in thy presence, when I see how fraile I am, and weake to resist affections : which albeit they draw mee not altogether to assent, yet they disquiet mee greatly by their sore assaults, and make mee weary of my life, they fight to within mee.

Ro. 7. 15.

16. 17. 14.

And hereby more evidently I perceiue mine owne infirmities, in that I see wicked cogitations do more easily inuaile, than forsake me.

Oh that thou most mighty God of Israel, and loue of godly soules, oh that thou wouldest beholde my paine and grieffe, and prosper mine ende- uours.

He. 4. 15

Pla. 35

16

Strengthen me with courage from thine holy heauens, that the olde man, euen the miserable flesh, not plainly as yet made subiect to the Spirit, get not the vpper hand, whom as long as wee liue in this wretched world wee must resist. I call it wretched, because therein all things are full of snares, & enemies. Fortentations come vpon tentations: yea, while one conflict is a making, others come on the neck of them vnllooked for.

Rom. 8. 5

Ro. 6. 12.

Gal. 5. 16

17.

Iob. 14. 1

21.

1 Pet. 5. 8

Iob. 7. 13

14.

So then, can this life be loued which

hath

Many dispraise, few de-
spise the world.

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hath so much gall therein, and is open
to so many troubles, & miseries. Or
can it bee called a life, which causeth
so many deaths and plagues. And
yet notwithstanding all this, it is lo-
ued, and many seeke for pleasure in
the same.

The world is many times dispraised
because it is deceitfull, and vaine:
and yet it is hardly forsaken, the de-
sires of the flesh beare such a sway.

For in very deepe somethings pro-
voke to loue, other to abhorre the
same. To loue it, the lust of the flesh
& of the eyes with the pride of life,
will allure; to abhor it, the paines and
euermore miseries to come may
cause.

But, alas, vile pleasure subdueth the
minde addicted to the world: so that
to feed the senses, it thinketh it a pa-
stime, having neither seen, nor tasted
the sweetnesse of the Lord's, nor the
inner comfort of vertues.

But they, which vnderly contemne
the World, and study vnder holie
discipline to liue vnto GOD, they
both knowe the heavenly comfort
promised vnto such as forsake them-
selves, and also perceiue how la-
mentably the world doth erre, and
lies

CHAP. XXIII.

*That we must repose no confidence in
any creature, but in God
alone.*

SERVANT.

O My Soule, trust in the Lord in *Psalm 16. 7.*
all things, and about all things,
for he is the everlasting rest of the
godly *Psalm 132. 2.*

14

Give me grace, O sweete Iesu, O
my God, to rest in thee about all
things in the world; about all health
and beauty, about all honour and
glory, about all power and dignitie,
about all knowledge and dexteritie
of wit, about all cunning and riches,
about all mirth and ioyfulness, about
all praise, all fame, all sweetnesse, all
pleasure, about all hope, all promise,
and all merit, about all desire, all
gifts, all rewardes which thou canst
give and poure out, about all ioy &
iollity which the mind can feele, and
conceiue; finally, about all Angels
and Archangels, about all the host
of heauen, about all things visible &
inuisible, about all things which
thou

c Mat. 20 thou art not c. O my God.
27. 38. 39 For thou my God, thou art best of
& 19. 27 all; thou alone art almighty, thou a-
28. 39 lone art plentiful, thou art most sweet,
Ro 18. 35 and thou art most comfortable; thou
38. 39 art most faire, most louely, most no-
1 Ioh. 2. 15 ble, and most glorious d.

d pfa. 36. 5 In thee are, haue beene, and will
& c. bee euermore all good, and perfect
Pfa. 42. 1 things; and therefore both little is
it, and lesse than thy selfe, whatsoe-
uer thou giuest mee besides thy selfe
or openest and promist of thy selfe
not scene, neither perfectly array-
ned.

For my minde will neuer bee at
quiet, not content with that is pre-
sent, vntill, hauing passed ouer all
epfa. 116. 7 gifts and worldly things, it rest in
thee.

O Christ my sweet spouse and Sa-
uour, O most faithfull louer, Lord of
f1 Ti. 6. 13 the whole world, O that I had the
Reu. 1. 8 wings of true liberty, that I might fly
g Pfa. 55. 6 vnto thee, and rest in thee g!

O when shall I be mine owne man,
and beholds how sweete thou art,
b Pfa. 34. 8 my Lord, my God b, when shall I
winde my selfe wholly into thee in
such sort, that for the entire good
will I beare thee, I may not knowe

Chap. 24. 165 The godly grone to come to God
of the Imitation of Christ.

my selfe, but thee alone after an incredible manner, knowne but vnto few.

1 Psal. 17. 19

Now oftentimes I sigh & beare my wretchednes with griefe, because much euills rush vpon me in this vale of miseries, the which many times trouble me, and grieue me, and overshadow mee, and hinder me, yea they distract & withdraw, and so intangle mee, that I can haue no free access vnto thee, nor enioy thy louing embracements in the presence of thy blessed Saints.

1 Ro. 7. 24

O my God, let my so manifold sighes & sorrowes of minde, which I feele in this world, moue thee.

1 Cor. 13

O Iesus, the brightnesse of eternall glorie, and comfort of the wandering soule, my mouth is with thee that can not speake, and in silence doe I speake to thee.

12

1 Esai. 30

15

How long will my Lord deferre his comming? Oh that he would come to me poore wretch, make mee glad and with stretched-out arme deliuer me from all trouble.

1 Psal. 7

Come Lord Iesus, come o. For lacking thee, I am no day, no houre in quiet, because thou art my ioy, without whom my table is empty.

1 Psal. 10

5. 6. 7

I

I am a caitiue, and know not how
kept in prison, and kept downe with
fettlers p, & so shall be, till thou com-
fort me with the light of thy presence
set me at libertie, & shew me a friend-
ly countenance q.

Let others seeke in steede of thee
what they will, nothing either dooth
or shall please mee, but thou, my
GOD, my hope, and eternall salua-
tion r.

I will neuer be silent, I will neuer
cease to pray s, vntill thou put away
all displeasure, & speake to me again.

L O R D. Loe, because thou callest
for mee, I am come: thy teares, thy
griuing, thy humility, and heartie
sorrow haue moued me so to do.

S E R V A N T. O my lord, through
the desire I haue to enioy thee, I who
am readie to renounce all things for
thy sake t, haue called thee. But thou
first diddest stirre me vp to seeke thee
u; for which thing, O Lord, I yeeld
thee humble thanks, who of thy
great goodnesse, hast bestowed so
singular a benefite vpon me.

Now what remaineth, but that I
humbly submit my selfe to thee x,
being alwayes mindfull of my finnes,
and vilenesse y?

For

of the Imitation of Christ.

For among all things either in hea-
uen or earth, none is like vnto thee. *2 Pl. 3. 20*
Thy works are exceedingly good. *& 7. 1. 19*
O Lord, thy iudgements are true, & *& 8. 9. 13*
all things are guided by thy proui- *& 8. 6. 8*
dence. *6.*

Wherefore praised and magnified
be thou, O wisdom of the Father; *6 Pl. 19. 12*
and thou my soule *d*, & mouth, with *Math. 6*
all creatures of the world *e*, extoll and *16. &c.*
glorifie him for euer. *1. 1. cor. 1. 14*

Colos. 3. 3
d Pl. 146.

CHAP. XXV.

*Of the continuall calling into mind
the infinite blessings and
benefits of
God.*

1. 1.
e Pl. 150. 6
& 148. 1.
&c.

SERVANT.

O LORD open thou the eyes
of my vnderstanding *a*, and *Psal. 119*
teach me to liue according vnto the *18.*
rules of thy law.

Grant that I may know thy will,
and with great reuerence and paine-
fulnesse, call thy manifoulde benefits
bestowed both vpon mee, and all
men into minde, that so I may re-
der.

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der due praise vnto thee for the same b.

5 Pla. 28.7

6 Ecc. 18.4

7 Pla. 40.5

Albeito say the truth, I cannot sufficiently commend thee for the least of all thy benefits e: yea so vnable am I to extoll thee duly for them d, that when I consider thy liberality, I am vterly dismaide at the greatnesse thereof.

8 Psal. 33

6. & c.

9 1 Cor. 12.8

10 1 Sam. 1.17

11 Mat. 23

14. & c.

12 Ioh. 3.37

For whatloeuer wee haue, belonging either to the body, or the soule, outwardly, or inwardly, naturally or otherwise, they are thy benefits, and commend thy bountiounesse, and liberalitie e, of whom wee haue receiued all good things f.

And although some haue mo than others, yet all is thine g, and without thee, euen the least thing cannot bee attained h.

Now if any haue receiued greater gifts, hee cannot bragge of his owne merit, nor extoll himselfe about others, nor despise his inferiour i. For by so much is a man greater & better, by how much hee ascribeth lesse to himselfe k, and is the modefter in yeelding thanks. And the more vile and vnworthy a man iudgeth himselfe, the more capeable is he of greater things l.

13 1 Cor. 4

6.7.

14 Mar. 11

29.

15 Mat. 23

11.12.

16 Luk. 18

11.14

Againe

Againe, hee that hath fewer gifts, ought not to take it heauily, nor to enuy his better *m*, but rather to cast *n* Iam. 4. 2 his eyes vpon Heauen, and highly to commend thy goodnesse, who giuest thy gifts so abundantly, & so frankly without respect of persons *n*. *n* Mat. 7. 45

From thee we haue all *o*, and therefore in all things thou art to be glorified. What is meete for euery man thou knowest, and why this man hath little, & hee much, it is not for vs but for thee to iudge, who knowest what is necessary for euery man. *o* Luk. 16. 35 *o* 1 cor. 4. 6 Iam. 1. 17

Therefore my Lord, and God, I count it for a great benefite, to haue but few things which seeme glorious and prayse-worthy in the opinion of man. And thus I think, that baseness, and pouertie should bee so farre from disquieting the minde, and bringing downe a man, that they ought to bee occasions of great comfort and reioycing, inasmuch as thou, God, doost choose the poore, humble and despised in this world into the number of thy Saints and seruants *p*. *p* Psa. 113.

As witnesse thine Apostles, whom thou madest Princes through all the earth *q*: who behaued them selues so modestly, and shewed forth so little *q* 1 cor. 1. 26. *q* Ma'ice *q* Pl. 1. 11

malice, and deceit, that not onely
they abstained frō complaining, but
also reioyced to suffer rebuke for thy
r Act. 5. 41 name r, yea those things which wee
f 1 Thes. 2 naturally abhorre, they did greedily
embrace f.
2 Cor. 11 So that nothing should so comfort,
23 24. &c. and reioyce the hart of him which
loueth thee, & confesseth thy good-
nesse, as the knowledge of thine hea-
r Jer. 9. 23. uenly will: wherewith hee ought so
24. to content himselfe, that he desire as
1 Co. 1. 31 greatly to be of small as another doth
to bee of great account, and take as
well in worth the lowest place, as the
Mat. 20 highest roome; and to be despised &
25. 26. 27 contemned as to bee honoured, and
Mat. 6 extolled aboue all. For more should
10. and 26 he desire to haue thy will done, and
39. 42. 43 thine honour aduanced, than any
9 1. Ioh. 2 thing besides y; yea more pleasure
15. 16. 17 should hee take therein than in any
2 Rom. 8 thing else which either he hath alrea-
35. 39. &c. dy or may haue x.

CHAP. XXVI.

*Of the things in number foure, which
procure quietnesse.*

LORD.

I Will now teach thee my Sonne,
the ready way vnto peace and free-
dome.

SERVANT. Do Lord, as thou
sayest, for that is it which I desire.

LORD. My Son, doe the will of
another, rather than thine owne will, *a Ioh. 4. 34*
alwaies desire little before a great *and 5. 30*
deal *b*, alwaies couet the lowest place *and 6. 38*
b, and submit thy selfe to all *d*, alwaies *b* Act. 10
pray, and wish that thou maiest tho- *33. 34. 35*
rowly do the will of God *e*, & doubt- *e* Lub. 14
lesse thou shalt enter into the bounds *8. 9. 10*
of peace and quietnesse. *Pro. 25. 7*

SERV. This thy short speech
Lord, containeth much perfection;
and though it bee briefe for wordes,
yet is it pithy for sense, and most ef-
fectuall. And, did I faithfully obey
the same, sure I am, affections would
not beare such a sway within mee, as *f* Rom. 7
they doe *f*: and I neuer am grieved, *19. &c.*
and out of quiet, but when I swaue *Gal. 5. 17*
from

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from thy doctrine.

But thou, Lord, which art almighty, and alwaies dost desire the welfare of man g, extend thy fauour towards me, that both I may doe thy will, and attaine saluation, Amen.

CHAP. XXVII.

A prayer against euill thoughts or cogitations.

SERVANT.

O Lord my GOD, forsake mee not: & my God, assist me. For euill cogitations, and feares be in my mind, which disquiet mee, insomuch that I see not how to auoide, and breake them off without great hurt to my selfe.

LORD, I will goe before thee, and suppress the power of man: and hauing opened the prison doore & reueale my secrets, and my sterics vnto thee.

SERVANT. Do so, Lord, and with thy countenance & banish all wicked cogitations from my mind. For this is my onely hope & comfort in trouble, euen to fly vnto thee & to depend

Chap. 28. 173 *They prosper whom God favours
of the Imitation of Christ.*

pend vpon thee, to call vpon thee zealously, and patiently to expect thine heauenly comfort c.

c Psal. 37.4

CHAP. XXVIII.

*A prayer vnto almighty God, to haue
the eyes of our vnderstanding
opened.*

SERVANT.

O Sweet Iesu, lighten me with the brightnes of thine eternal light, drine all darknes as it were, from the mansion of my soule a.

a Ioh. 19

& 12

Suppress those wandring thoughts, and breake in peeces those violent tentations.

Fight thou courageously for my defence, and vanquish euill beasts, to wit, the enticing desires of the flesh, that by thy power I may get peace, & sing out thy praises in the holy court of my soule.

Rebuke the windes b, and tempest, commaund the Sea to be quier, bid the Northwind not to rage, and there will be great calmenesse. Send thy light, & truth c, which may lighten the earth: for I am rude earth,

b Mar. 8.26

Luk. 8.24

c Psal. 43.3

good for thought, vtill thou enlighten me.

Poure out thy fauor frō aboute, replenish my soule with thy heavenly grace; & minister the water of godlinesse, wherewith the vppermost part of the earth being watred, may bring forth good, or the best fruit rather.

O Lord, lift vp my mind, which is pressed downe through the waight of sinnes, & stirre vp the same wholly to the desire of celestiaall things; that hauing tasted the sweetnes of spirituall happinesse, it may greatly grieue me euen to thinke of this world *d*. Take me or pluck mee rather from all momentarie pleasure of earthly things: for no creature can either quiet, or comfort my mind *e*.

d Phi. 3. 9

Col. 3. 1. 2

e Ioh. 16

33

2 Thes. 1

16. 17

f Col. 3. 2

Ioyne me to thee by an indissoluble band of good wil. For thou alone doest suffice thy friend, & without thee all other things are vaine *f*. Amen.

CHAP. XXIX.

*That wee ought not curiously to enquire
how other men doe liue.*

LORD.

MY Son, be not curious, neither haue thou vaine cogitations in thy minde. What is this or that vnto thee

of the Imitation of Christ.

thee? follow thou mee *a*. For thou *a* Io. 21.22
 needest not care what maner of folks
 others are, either what they doe or *b* Math. 7
 speake *b*. 1.2.&c.

Thou art not appointed to pleade
 for other men, but thou must answer *c* Mat. 25
 for thy selfe *c*. Why then medlest thou *d* 20.21.&c.
 with that which nothing toucheth *e* 1 Pe. 4.4.
 thee? *f* Gal. 6. 5.

It is I which knowe all, and see all *g* Reu. 21.12
 what(euer is done vnder the coape
 of heauen *d*: yea I know how it go- *d* Mat. 13.2
 eth with euery man, what hee thinks,
 what he would, & whither his counsell *e* Psa. 7.9
 tends *e*. *f* Heb. 4. 13.

And therefore commit all things to *g* Reu. 2.23.
 me, be thou quiet, & let troublesome
 people alone in their dooings. For
 they shall one day yeeld an account *f* Ro. 14.12
 of all their deeds, and sayings, either
 can they mocke mee *g*. *h* Gal. 6.7

Wish thou neither the shadowe
 of a great name, nor the familiar-
 itie of manie, nor the priuate good
 will of men. For these things do but
 distract the mind sundry waies, and
 replenish it with blacke cloudes of
 darknes.

Wouldst thou diligently attend
 my comming, and open the doore *i* b Cant. 5.2
 of thy mind to let me in, then would *g* Reu. 3.20

I gladly ſpeak, and reueale my ſecrets
vnto thee.

CHAP. XXX.

*Wherein the true peace and profiting of
the minde doth conſiſt.*

LORD.

Io. 14. 27 **M**Y Sonne, thus I haue ſaid *a* :
Peace I leaue with you ; my
peace I giue vnto you, not as the
world giueth, giue I vnto you.

All men deſire peace: but all men
care not for thoſe things which be-
b Lu. 19. 42 long vnto the right peace *b*.

c Pſal. 119. My peace dealeth with ſuch as are
130. modeſt, and meeke in heart *c*. Thy

Mat. 11. 29 peace doth conſiſt in long ſuffering,
d Lu. 21. 19 which thou maiest enioy plentifully,

Ro. 2. 7. 10. if thou wilt harken vnto me, & follow
e Pſal. 119 my ſayings *e*. Wherefore in all things

1. 2. conſider what thou dooſt, and what
thou ſpeakeſt, and let this bee thy
chiefeſt care, how thou maiest pleaſe

f Col. 1. 10 meſ, and beſides me, take pleaſure in
Eph. 5. 10. nothing *g*.

g Ier. 9. 23. Of other mens ſayings and doings
24. iudge not thou raſhly *h*, neither in-

h Mat. 17 trude thy ſelfe into another mans
charge

charge i : so shalt thou either little, i 2 Thel. 3
or very seldome be troubled. 11.

For thou canst not bee voide of all
trouble, liuing in this world k: to feele k Io. 16. 33
no vexation either in minde or body,
is peculiar to the Saints in Heaven,
which enioy eueralsting rest L. 1 Io. 16. 19

So then, thinke not that thou hast Reu. 12. 4
found true peace, if thou feele no ad-
uersitie m; or that all is well, if thou m 1 Cor. 4
haue none enemy; or that thou art 8. & c.
in good state, if thou enioy prosperi-
tie n: neither deem that thou art som. n 1 Thel. 5
what, or highly in my fauour, though 2. 7.
thou remainest where great exercise
of religion is: yea, or tastest the
sweetness of the same o. For by these o Mar. 14
things a true louer of godlines is 17. 18. 19.
not kuowen, neither doth the profi- 20.
ting and perfection of a man consist
in these things.

Wherein then? namely in submit-
ting thy selfe whollie to the will of
God: and in seeking thy selfe in ne-
thing p, bee it little or much, neither p Rom. 12
now nor here after, but alwaies both 16.
in wealth and wee keeping one man-
ner of countenance with thank-
ping q, waying euery thing in Phil. 4.
balance.

Finally, if thou shewe thy

† Rom. 5

3. 4. 5.

1am. 1. 3

f Luk. 18

11. 12

Rom. 11.

18. 20

† Pl. 2. 2. 2.

† Psal. 91

14. 15. 16

† Phi. 4. 11

12. 13

Colos. 3. 5

valiant, & constant in faith, that when inward cōsolation is withdrawn, thou canst addresse thy selfe to suffer great things r, and yet for all that refraine from praising thy selfe vainly for thine holinesse & zeale s, doubtlesse thou shalt finde the right and ready way vnto peace t, yea and one day behold my countenance againe with mirth, and ioy u.

And if thou once come vnto such a passe, that thou canst fully & perfectly contemne thy selfe x, knowe of a truth, that thou shalt enioy as much peace and quietnesse, as possibly may come vnto a mortall man.

CHAP. XXXI.

*In praise of a quiet and free mind, with
an humble petition for the attaining
of the same.*

SERVANT.

Doubtlesse, it is the part of a perfect man, Lord, neuer to loose the mind from the study of heavenly things; but to passe over the manifold cares of this world euen without care, not like a sluggard, but through
the

the excellence of a free mind, cleaving
to no worldly thing with an immoderate desire *a*.

a Phil. 3. 7

O most gracious & merciful God, Col. 3. 1. 2
keepe mee, I beseech thee, from the 1 Ioh. 2. 15
cares of this world *b*. that I be neuer *b* Mat. 6. 25
too much intangled by reason of the 26. &c.
manifold things, which this body 1 cor. 7. 21
needeth, nor taken with vaine delight
of that which hurts the soule; nor finally
broken and ouerthrowne with
sorrows.

I say, not from those things which
the vaine worlde doth greedily hunt
after *c*, but from those miseries, which *c* 1 Ioh. 2
suppresse the mind of thy seruant by 16
a common and penall curse of mortality,
and so withdraw me that I cannot enter
when I would into the freedom of the spirit *d*.

d Rom. 7

O my God, which art sweetnes vn- 16. 17
speakable, make all fleshly ioy, which
withdraweth mee from the loue of
eternall things, and enuileth with
the beholding of (I cannot tel what)
present and pleasing goodnes, make
this ioy to bee grieuous and odious
vnto me *e*.

e Gal. 6. 14

Let not flesh & blood, O my God, Phil. 3. 7
ke not flesh and blood overcome *f* 1 Ioh. 2
me *f*, let not the world and the vaine- 15. 16

glory

The third booke

glor. 12. 32 glory thereof deceiue mee g; let not
h 1 pet. 5. 8 Satan by his subtiltie supplant me h.
i 1 pet. 5. 9 Giue mee strength to resist i; pati.
k Eph. 3. 16 ence to endure k; constancy to perse-
17 uer vnto the end l.

Ro. 12. 12 Grant me for the comforts of this
l Mat. 24. 13 world, the most comfortable oynt-

Reu. 2. 7 ment m of thine holy Spirit, and for

m 2 Cor. 1 the lust of the flesh poure on mee the
21 loue of thy name n. The very meate

n lam. 4. 4 and drinke, and apparell, with other
things necessarie for the nourishment
of the bodie, are euen burdensome to

o 1 Cor. 7 a feruent spirit o. Giue grace that I

32. 33. 34 may vse these things moderately, and
neuer bee snarled with an ouer-great

p Mat. 6. 25 desire of them p.

All things are not to bee reiected,
for then nature would decay: againe,
to couer superfluous and euery plea-
sant thing, thy sacred commande-
ments doe forbidde; for so the flesh
would insult over the spirit q. Where-
fore betweene these things let thine
hand direct me, and teach me to doe
nothing out of measure, Amen.

q Ro. 8. 8

Gal. 5. 16

17

Chap. 32 181 Selfe loue mother of perdition
of the Imitation of Christ.

CHAB. XXXII.

*That selfe loue is the cause of
perdition.*

LORD.

MY Sonne, thou must buy the
whole, with the whole, & keep
back nothing of thy selfe *a*. For know *a* Mar. 19
this, selfe loue doth more hurt thee *b* 21.28.29
than any thing besides: and accor- Luk. 9.23
ding to thy loue, euery thing dooth *c* 24
more or lesse cleaue vnto thee. So that *b* Mat. 7.3
if thy loue be pure *c*, simple, and god- 4.5
ly, thou shalt bee quit from the bon- & 19.22
dage of things. *c* Ioh. 2.17

Couet not that, which thou maiest
not haue *d*: and haue not that which *d* Ex. 20.17
may hinder thee, and deprive thee of Rom. 7.7
the liberty of minde *e*. *e* Gal. 5.16

It is marvellous that thou doost *f* 17
not wholly commit thy selfe to mee
with all that thou hast, or canst desire:
Why doost thou vainely consume
thy selfe with sorrow? Why dost thou
wearie thy selfe with superfluous
cares *f*? Shew thy selfe obedient to *f* Psa. 42.5
my will, and I will see that none hurt & 43.4
come vnto thee *g*. But if, to attaine *g* Mat. 6.33
profit

Things we possessed, but
despised, doe good.

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Chap. 32

The third booke

profit, and to enioy thy desire, thou
apply thy selfe to seeke things, and
minde to change thy soyle, looke ne-
uer to bee at quiet, or free from care.
For in euery thing thou shalt wish
some thing, and in no place look for
perfect peace.

Therefore euery thing doth good,
but not euery thing which wee haue
gotten, and mightily heaped toge-
ther, but contemned & cut from the
mind by the roots *b*: which I would
not should be vnderstood of monie,
and riches only, but also of the desire
of honour and vaine glorie, all which

b Ph. 3. 7. 8

3 1 Io. 2. 17

1 cor. 7. 31

4 Gal. 5. 22

1 Joh. 1. 42

doe perish with the world *i*.
The place also doth smally defend,
if zeale of the spirit be lacking *k*, nei-
ther can that outward peace long con-
tinue *l*, if it be not grounded vpon a
stayed minde: that is, vnlesse thou
depend vpon me, though thou change
thy soyle, thou shalt not better thy
selfe. For when occasion doth arise,
and is receined, thou shalt finde not
onely those things which thou didst
shun, but a great deale more.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

*A prayer to obtaine the puritie of minde
and heavenly wisdom.*

SERVANT.

2 Eph. 2.16

6 1 Co. 7.32

STrengthen mee, O God, by the
Grace of thy holy spirit, confirm
the inner man, that my mind may
utterly be void of all vaine cares,
griefe, and I neuer drawn away with
the desire of any thing bee it vile or
precious, but may count both my
selfe, and all other things euen cor-
ruptible: forasmuch, as nothing
vnder the Sun continueth euere,
they are all vaine, and vexations of
the spirit. Hee who thus thinketh,
is most singularly wise.

2 Luk. 2.23

d Phil. 3.8

e Ecc. 1.34

b, & 1 Ioh. 2.17

f Eccl. 2

11. &c.

Eccl. 3.26

Wisd. 9.4

Iam. 1.5

g Mat. 6.33

h psal. 34.8

i Mat. 22.37

Mar. 12

O Lord, giue me heavenly wis-
dome, which may teach mee to
seeke thee, and finde thee about all;
fauour of thee, and to loue thee
about all, and to take other things as
they are in themselves; according to
the order of wisdom. Giue mee
grace both wisely to auoyde flatter-
ers, and patiently to beare my
foes. For neither to bee moued with
euery

29.30

h Luk. 10.27

11 Cor. 7

k 29.30.31

m Pr. 2.16

8.5.3.4

8.9.5

n 1 pet. 2

21.23. and

1 pet. 3.8.9

Pro. 16.32

b Pr. 14. 29 every blast of words e, nor to listen
p Ecc. 7. 28 to the flattering Mermaid *p*, is doubt-
Pro. 6. 20 lesse a great part of wisdom ; and the
&c. 24 ready way to goe forward safelie in
 our iourney begun.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Against ill tongues.

L O R D.

MY Son, take it not grienously
 though some conceiue, & speak
Mat. 5. 11 amiss of thee : but thinke worle of
 thy selfe then they do, & belieue that
b Lu. 18. 13 none is more weake then thy selfe *b*.
 If thou tread the secret path of ver-
 tue, thou wilt not greatly weigh fly-
e Ps. 56. 11 ing words e.

It is no small wisdom in aduersity
d ps. 112. 7 to be silent *d*, to turne vnto mee, and
Esa. 50. 15 not to bee disturbed whatsoever men
Luk. 21. 19 do think. Thy peace must not depend
 vpon the speech of men : for thou art
 one manner of man still, speake they
 ill, or speake they well of thee : but in
 me, in mee, I say, true glory, and true
e Io. 16. 33 peace doth consist e, the which hee
 shall mightily enioy, who neither de-
f Mat. 10. 28 sireth to please men, nor feareth their
 displeasure f.

Of

Chap. 39. 185 Without God, man perissheth
of the Imitation of Christ.

Of vntemperate loue, and vaine
feare, all vnquietnesse of minde, and
distracting of the senses do arise g. g Mar. 20.
21. 22.

CHAP. XXXV.

How we ought to call vpon God, and to
praise him in aduersitie.

SERVANT.

PRaised be thy name O Lord, for
euermore, whose will it is, that
I should bee tried with this affliction
a: which of my selfe I cannot escape, a Ia. 1. 12
but am to flie vnto thee, requiring
thine assistance b, and to turne it to b ps. 71. 2. 3
the best.

O Lord now am I in trouble, & my
minde is grievously vexed through
my present misery.

And therefore, O most deare father,
what shall I say? I am intrapped on
euery side & deliuer me fro this houre,
whereinto I doubtless came, that thou
therby mightest purchase great praise
both for bringing me so downe, and
deliuering me againe c.

c Psal. 22

O Lord, I beseech thee deliuer mee
from this euill, mee poore and needy 23. 24
soule d, knowing not whether to turn d Psal. 40
my selfe without thee. 17.

In

The third booke

In like sort, O Lord, giue me patience He. 12. 1. once now e, helpe me O my God, so and ro. 36 will I not feare, bee I neuer so griefe Ps. 30. 11 ouously afflicted f.

Act. 5. 41 And now in these my troubles, what shal I say? Euen thy wil be done g Mat. 6. 10 Lord g: I haue deserued this affliction b Ps. 69. 5 on and punishment h, and therefore must of necessity beare it (God grant that patiently I may doe so) till after these stormes faire weather comes againe.

I knowe right wel thou canst by thy almightinesse either altogether remove away this tentation or mitigate the rage thereof, that I faint not vtterly as often heretofore thou hast done s, Ps. 77. 1. of thy great meicy towards mee, O 2. 5. 6. & c my God. And the more troubles suppress me, the more sweetly shall I be refreshed with the helpe of thine almightie right hand.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Of calling for gods assistance, and hope to recover his fauour againe.

SERVANT.

MY Sonne, I am that Lord euen Nah. 1. 7 the strengthener of men in the day of trouble a, vnto whom thou must make recourse as often as it goes

Chap. 36. 137 Prayer the expeller of impiety
of the Imitation of Christ.

goes not well with thee.

But thou seekest not my heavenly
comfort, because thou turnest not thy
selfe with speed vnto prayer b. b Ps. 50. 15
Psa. 86. 1

For before thou makest any earnest
prayer vnto mee, thou seekest much
comfort else-where, and takest plea-
sure in outward things; which doe
thee small good, vntill thou per-
swade thy selfe indeed, that I it is e Psal. 33. 8
who deliuer such out of trouble as and 17. 14
put their confidence in mee e, & that and 13. 24
without mee no helpe is auailable d, d Psal. 33.
no counsell profitable e, no physicke 16. 17. 18
durable f. e Job 5. 13
Psal. 27. 4

But now hauing taken courage vn-
to thee after stormes, were thou
strong againe in the light of my mer-
cy. For I am ready, saith the Lord, b Reu. 21. 1
not onely to restore all things to their 2 Pet. 3. 13
integritie, but also mightily to renue
them b. Iob 9. 4. 5.
6. &c.

Is there any thing too hard for me k 1 Kin. 8
? Or am I like to them which keepe 23
not promise k? Where is thy faith? Tit. 1. 1. 2
Stand constantly, and perseuer: shew
thy selfe a patient and valiant mee, 23
and doubt thou not, but in due time m ps. 27. 14
thou shalt finde comfort. 1 Cor. 13

Waite n, waite, I say for mee, and I n Psal. 37
will come and heale thee. It is tenta- 37. 34
tion

The third booke

o Mat. 6. 25
26. &c.

Pro. 10. 22

p Mat. 6. 34

tion that troubles thee, & vaine feare which terrifies. What good doth care of future chances, but euen bring sorrow vpon sorrow o? The day hath enough with his owne grieffe p. A vaine thing it is, and to no purpose, either to bee sadde or to reioyce for things to come, which perhaps will neuer come to passe.

g Mat. 14

31

Mar. 4. 8. 9

Luk. 4. 6. 7

But man with such imaginations may be deceiued: albeit so easily to be carried away with the tentation of the enemy, is an argument of a faint heart, & little faith g. He weigheth not whither he illude and deceiue a man, with true things or with false; whether with the loue of present r, or feare of things to come.

p Psal. 27. 1

& 28. 7. &

34. 22. &

115. 11

p Psal. 119

151. 153

1 co. 10. 13

u Is. 1. 12

Wherefore neither bee thou troubled in minde, nor feare; trust onely in me, and repose confidence in my mercys.

Many times thou thinkest I am far off, when indeed I am at hand r: and when thou supposest that all is gone, many times thy gaine comes rolling in u. So that all is not lost though thou sustaine aduersity.

According to the sense of present miseries, thou must not iudge, neither when any mischaunce happeneth

Chap. 36. 189 *Aduersity physicke for the soule
of the Imitation of Christ.*

neth, be so moued and dismayd as
though no hope of escape were left at
all.

Think not thou art vtterly cast off, *2^a 1 Cor. 10.13*

though for a time either I send affli-
ction, or deny thy desired comfort:
for thereby thou must enter into the
kingdome of heauen. And assuredly *Act. 14*

ly it is better both for thee, and all *22*
the rest of my seruants, to bee stirred
vp with aduersitie, than to enioy all *Psal. 119*
things at your hearts desire. *67*

For I am so priuy to the secret co- *Luk 9.13*
gitations of thy hart, that I know it is *1 pet. 1.6.7*
greatly for thine eueralsting welfare,
to bee sometimes left to thy selfe
in troubles, least perchance beeing
puffed vp with prosperitie, thou
think thy selfe to be that which thou
art not.

I can take away that I gaue, and *6 Mat. 25*
giue it againe when I thinke good. *14.15*
If I gaue it, it was mine; if I tooke *&c. 28.*
away, I tooke not thine, forasmuch *1^a 1 cor. 4.7*
as euery good giuing, and euery per- *d 1a. 1.17*
fect gift is from me. *1^a 1 pe. 4.12*

Wherefore when I send thee miserie *f He. 12.3*
and aduersitie, neither do thou fret, and *10*
nor faint: for I, euen I the same *34.36*
can speedily succour thee, and turne *g De. 31.39*
thy sorrow into ioy againe. *1 Sa. 20*

But

h pl. 119. 75 But in that I deal so with thee, I am
Dan. 9. 14 righteous h, & much to be commen.
1 The. 1. 6 ded. And if thou beest wise, & weigh-
Iam. 1. 2 est this my doing vprightly, thou wilt
k Ep. 5. 20 neuer so heavily mourn for thine ad-
I Job 6. 7 uersity, but rather be glad, and thank
10 me therfore k: yea thou wilt confesse
m Job. 15. 9 thy selfe that heerein especially thou
n Io. 16. 20 shouldest reioice, in that in punishing
o Mat. 10 I doe not spare thee l.
16. 17. 18 As the Father hath loued mee, so
p Lu. 22. 25 haue I loued you. said I to my Disci-
q Mat. 5. 12 ples m whom I sent not vnto transi-
I Pet. 2. 13 tory pleasures n, but vnto great com-
14 bats, not vnto honour, but vnto in-
r Mat. 10 famy q, not vnto idleness r, but vnto
7. 8. &c. painefulness, not vnto rest s, but to
f Mat. 9. 37 bring forth much fruit with patience.
38 My Son, forget not these my words.
p Lu. 10. 2

CHAP. XXXVII.

*That to finde God our Creator, we should
forsake all things.*

SERVANT.

O My Lord, as yet I stand greatly
in need of thy fauor, that I may
come to that passe that neither man,
nor

of the Imitation of Chriſt.

nor any other creature may let mee. *a* Rom. 8
For as long as any thing detaines mee 35. 36. &c.
back, I cannot freely take my flight
vnto thee *b*. *b* Luk. 9

He that ſaids, Oh that I had wings 23. 24. 25
like a Dove, that I might flee 2. *c* Pla. 55. 6
way and reſt ! hee would freely haue
flyed.

What is more quiet than the ſim-
ple eye *d* ? or what more at libertie, *d* Mat. 9. 22
than he which deſireth nothing in the
world *e* ? *e* Luk. 9. 23

So that man muſt overpaſſ all crea-
tures, & bring himſelfe vnto that for-
wardneſſe, that raviſhed beſide him-
ſelfe, hee confeſſe that thou the Crea-
tor of all things art nothing like vn-
to thy creatures *f*. *f* Eſa. 44. 6.

Vnleſſe man be free from the loue 7. 8.
of euery creature *g*, hee cannot quiet- *g* Eſa. 55. 8. 9
lie apply himſelfe vnto heauenlie *h* Reu. 5. 2
things. *h* 3. 5.

For therefore fewe there be which *g* Lu. 5. 11
addict themſelues to the ſtudy of ce- *g* Luk. 14.
leſtiall things, becauſe few can with- 26. 27
draw themſelues wholly fro the loue
of this world *h*. *h* Mat. 21. 5

But to doe ſo, wee haue need of the *Luk. 14. 18*
ſpeciall fauour of God *i*, which may *i* loh. 6. 44
lift vp the mind, and raviſh it aboue *65*.
it ſelfe.

And

And vnlesse man bee lo lifted vp in spirit, and, beeing deliuered from all worldly things, conioyned to God, whatsoeuer hee either knoweth, or

k 1 Co. 13 possesseth, is to very small purpose k
1.2.3.

A long while shall hee be a nouice, and grouell on the ground, which maketh account of any thing, beside that one eternall, end infinite good thing l. Whatsoeuer is not God, is

l Mat. 13
44.54.
m Rom. 8. nothing, and to be esteemed for no-
thing m.
12.34. &c.

Phil. 3.8 Doubtless great difference is there
n Gal. 1 between the wisdom of a man inspired from aboue n, & the knowledge
11.12 of worldly wisemen a: & much more
o 1 cor. 1 excellent is that doctrine which floweth from heauen p, and the celestiaall
18.19. &c fountain, then that is painfully fetcht
p 2 Tim. 3. from the braines of man q
16.17

q Mat. 1.5 9 Many there bee which study hea-
1 cor. 1.20 uenly things; but which doe those
r Mat. 7.22 things which belong thereunto r, not
Ro 2.21 many.
22 &c.

Another great let is, for that men
Iam. 1.22 stand vpon signes, and sensible things
23. &c. s, and bestow small diligence in the,
s Gal. 4 9 mortifying of themselves t.
10. & 5.1

I maruell what the matter is, or
Col. 2.20 with what spirit wee are led, or what
t Col. 3.5 commeth into our minds, which are
Gala. 6.14 called.

called spirituall, that with such care
and study wee seeke after vile and va- *Mat. 9. 19*
nishing things *u*, and so seldome call *Ezec. 34. 2*
our wits together to thinke vpon the *1 Pet. 5. 2*
matters of saluation *x*; Yea, after a *x Col. 3. 2.*
little consideration, wee by & by burst *y Reu. 3*
out againe, and woy not our deeds a- *17. 18*
ny more in the balance *y*. *2 Mat. 6. 21*

Where our affections bee *z*, wee *a Esa. 6. 46*
mark not, and that all which we haue *b Ro. 3. 10*
is vnpure *a*, we lament not. *11. 13*

For euery man hath corrupted his *Psa. 14. 1. 3*
waies, which was the cause of so great *c Mat. 24*
a flood in the old world *c*. *37. 38. 39.*

So that the affection within, being *Luk. 17*
vnpure, needs must the actions pro- *26. 27*
ceeding from the affections, which *d Math. 6*
shewe the want of strength, bee vn- *23. 23; and*
pure *d*. For of a pure minde the fruite *12. 33. 35*
of a good life doth proceed *e*. *e Lu. 6. 45*

Inquiry is made, how much a man
doth: but how zealously it was done,
no consideration is had.

Whether he be rich, or strong, or
faire, or stout; whether hee can write
well, or sing well, or play well, wee
enquire: but how poore in spirit hee
is *f*, how patient and meeke *g*, how *f Math. 5. 5*
religious and spirituall, many will not *g Mat. 11. 29*
tell.

Nature behouldeth the outward
parts

hoh. 7. 24 parts of man b; Grace respecteth the
and 8. 15 inward: that commonly is decei-
i Tim. 2. 5 ued h; this hath her trust in God L; that
Job. 8. 16 she may not erre.

k Iam. 2. 6.

l Pla. 1. 16

7. 8. 9

CHAP. XXXVIII.

That we must deny our selues, and re-
nounce vicerly all carnall desires.

a Lu. 9. 23.

b i Cor. 6

LORD.

9. 10

c Esa. 5. 13

d Tim. 6. 8

9. 10.

e Iam. 1.

MY Son, thou canst not come
vnto perfect freedom, vntil
lesse thou vicerly deny thy
selfe.

13. 14. 15. As many as are conctious o, as ma-
2 Pe. 2. 11. ny as loue themselves e, as many as
e1 Ti. 1. 4. lust d. as are curious o, busie bodies f,
f1 Pe. 4. 15. desirous alwaies of pleasure, not of
g Lu. 16. 25. Iesus Christ g, attempting that which
h pl. 1. 2 &c shall not abide h, (for whatsoever is
i Act. 5. 38 not of God, will come to nought.)
39. are captiues and in bondage vnto Sa-
k Rom. 6. 13. n.

12. 13. 14. Take this for all: Forsake all, and
l Luk. 9. 2. finde all m. Forsake thy desire n, and
m Mat. 16. finde rest o. Meditate heretof continu-
27. 28. 29. ally, and when thou hast fulfilled all,
n Mat. 8. 34. thou shalt vnderstand.

o Mat. 10. 26. SER V. O my Lord, this can

Chap. 38 193 Precious things before God
of the Imitation of Christ. are vile before man
not bee done in a day, neither is it a
play for children: but therein briefly
the whole perfection of a godly man
is comprehended.

LORD. Sonne, change not thy
mind for all that, neither be thou dis-
maied at the naming of perfection:
but so much the more stir vp thy selfe
vnto higher things p, and at the least p Phi. 3. 13
in desire sigh after them. 14 15

O that thou wert come vnto that
passe that thou couldest not loue thy
selfe, nor disobey me q: then would I q Rom. 12
like thee well, then shouldst thou lead 1.2
thy life in ioy and quietness r. r Leu. 6. 3

Thou hast as yet many things to be 4 & c.
forsaken, the which vlesse thou alto- Deut. 18
gether yeeld vp to mee, looke not to 1.2. & c.
attaine the end of thy desire.

I counsell thee to buy of mee gold
tried by the fire s, that thou maist be s Rev. 7. 13
made rich, I meane celestiallyl wise-
dome, which treadeth all abiect and
vile things vnder feet.

Cast away the wisdom of this
world t, that is, cease to please, and t 1 co. 1. 26
flatter thy selfe after the fashion of the t Job. 2
world u. 15. 16

I tell thee, the most vile things must x Mat. 13
bee bought with precious things x 44. 45. 46
and such things of greatest account
among

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among men. For the true wisdom
of God, which doth not arrogate
much to it selfe *y*. nor desireth to be
greatly accounted of in this world *z*,
which many commend in wordes *a*,
but dissent therefrom in deeds *b*, see-
meth but a vile *c*, and base thing, and
therefore is not thought vpon wel-
high: and yet for all that it is the pre-
tious treasure *d*, and the pearle hidden
fro many.

y 1 cor. 13

14

z Mat. 12

29

a Mat. 7

22. 23

b Mat. 23. 3*c* 1 Cor. 1

20. 21

d Mat. 13

44. 45 46

CHAP. XXXIX.

*The mutability of mans heart, and of
thinking vpon God, in and
afore all things.*

LORD.

MY Soone, belecue not the af-
fection, which moueth thee at
this time, for speedily it will change.

For so long as thou liuest, thou shalt
bee subiect to mutability, euen per-
force: and be now merry, now sad,
now quiet, now troubled, now zea-
lous, now colde; now earnest, now
retchlesse; now graue, and by and by
light of behauiour.

Notwithstanding, the wise man
rightly

rightly instructed in the spirit, standing fast vpon these mutable things, not regarding what hee seeleth in himselfe, or on what side the winde of instability doth blowe, but how hee may bring his purpose to a right and blessed end *b*.

b Psal. 16.8

For so it falleth out, that one and the same man may abide vnmouued *c*, among so manifold euents, if the single eye of his minde bee directed continually vpon me.

c Psal. 113.6.7.8

And the more pure the eye of his minde is *d*, the more constantly doth he abide in the midst of stormes *e*. But many haue this sight of their troubled, so that easily they looke vpon euery pleasure obiected: and hardly can one be found without all blemish of selfeloue *f*.

d Mat. 6.22.23
e Act. 5.41

So came the Iewes vnto Martha, and Marie being at Bethania, not for Iesus sake onely, but that they might see Lazarus *g*.

f 1 Cor. 13.4. & 2 cor. 12.14.15
g Ioh. 11.9

Therefore the eye of the mind must bee purged *h*, that it may bee simple, and right, and cast vpon mee, altogether, notwithstanding the manifolde diuersitie of things which come betwene.

h Mat. 6.17.34

CHAP. XL.

*That it is a pleasure aboue all pleasures,
to loue God aboue all, and in
all things.*

SERVANT.

a 1 cor. 15
28

BEhold, my God, and all things *a*.
What will I more? what more
happy thing can I wish for? O fa-
uorie and sweete word! but to him
which loueth the word, not the
world, nor the things in the world

b Ioh. 2. 15
16. 17

b. My God, and all things. To him
that vnderstandeth, I haue said suffi-
cient: and to reapeate the same often-
times, is a delight vnto him that lo-
ueth *c*.

e Rom. 8
31. 37. &c.
d Pla 104
29. 30

For if thou be present *d*, all things
bring ioy: if thou be absent, what can
make merry?

e Pla. 16. 89
f Rom. 8
35. 36. &c.
Phi. 4. 11
&c.

Thou makest the mind quiet; and
thou bringest much peace, and the
joy of heart *e*.

g Phi. 2. 13
h Eph. 5. 20

Through thee we think well of all
things *f*: and through thee *g* in all
things *h* wee praise thee. Without
thee nothing can like vs. long; and
that

of the Imitation of Christ.

that euery thing may be gratefull and good, thou must blesse it with thy fauor, and season it with the sauce of thy wisdom.

What is not sauiory to him, to whom thou art. sauiory? Againe, what can please him, to whom thou art not pleasant? *i Psal. 34. 8*

But the wise of this world, and such as sauiour of the flesh, lack thine heauenly wisdom: for in the flesh is death, and much vanitie in the world. *Rom. 8. 5*
1 Cor. 1. 19
20. & c.
m Ro. 8. 6.

But they are wise indeed, who follow thee in condemning the world, & in mortifying the flesh: because they are translated from vanity vnto verity & from the flesh to the spirit. These relish God: and these refer all things created, vnto the laude and praise of the Creator. *1 Cor. 1, 20.*
Rom. 8. 5
Ps. 69. 34.

But odds there is, and great odds too between the sauiour of the creature, and of the creature, of eternity, and of time, of light vncreated, and of light enlightened. *and 149. 1*
2. & c.
Rom. 8. 6.
1 Joh. 2
15. 16. 17

O light euerglasting, which passest all lights that are made, shine thou vpon mee, and pierce, purge, comfort, and lighten with thy brightness euery all the inward parts of my

The third booke

soule : reviuue my spirit with all the powers thereof, that I may cleaue vnto thee with a song of exceeding ioy.

Oh, when will that blessed houre come, alwayes to be wished, wherein thou wilt so fill me with thy presence, that thou wilt be all in all to mee, vntill when my ioy doubtlesse will not be perfect.

1 Cor. 15

28.

1 Ioh. 16

22.

9 Phi. 1. 23

2 Ga. 6. 14

4 Col. 3. 6

6 Gal. 5. 17

1 Iam. 4. 1.

As yet the old man *a*, to my great griefe *y*, not yet wholly crucified *z*, nor yet dead *a*, is within me. As yet the flesh lusteth against the spirit *b*, it fighteth within mee, and disquiets the kingdome of the soule.

1 Psal. 83. 9

Mat. 8. 26

Luk. 8. 24

1 epl. 68. 30.

But thou who rulest the raging of the sea, and stillest the waues thereof when they doe arise, scatter the people that delight in warre, bring them downe by thy mighty power. Extend thy mightinesse, and make thy right hand to be knowne.

f, Psal. 71. 1.

g PL. 56. 1.

For in thee, O Lord, is mine whole trust, mine only refuge is in thee *g*.

CHAP. XLI.

*That this life is neuer free from
temptation.*

LORD.

Looke not in this world to bee *a* Job. 7. 1.
without troubles my Sonne *a*, *b* 2 cor. 10
but while thou liuest, thou shalt stand *a*, 5.
in need of spirituall armour *b*. Thou Eph. 6. 10.
liuest among enemies on the right *a*, &c.
hand, and on the left, thou art assaul- *c* 2 co. 6. 7
ted *c*. And therefore vnlesse thou take Mat. 10. 16
the shield of faith *d*, and the sword of *d* Eph. 6. 16
the Spirit, which is the word of God, *e* Eph. 6. 17
thou canst not long be without some
griuous wound. *f* 2. Cor. 6

Furthermore, vnlesse thou fasten *a*, &c.
thy mind vpon mee with a pure affec- Eph. 6. 10
tion, to suffer all things for my sake *f*, Iam. 1. 2. 3
thou canst neither sustain the heat of *g* 2 Ti. 3. 7
persecution, nor obtain the crowne of Reu. 7. 3
eternall life *g*. Wherefore thou must *h* 14. 15. &c.
ouerpasse all things like a man *h*, and *h* ps. 31. 24
shewe a courage howsoeuer things *i* co. 16. 13
fall out. For to him which ouercom. *i* Reu. 3. 17
meth is Manna giuen *i*: but for him *k* Ma. 25. 10
who sleepeth, is misery prepared. *l* 11. 12. 13

Now if thou seeke rest in this life *l*, Iob. 16. 53

m He. 4. 11 how wilt thou enter into eternall
n He. 10. 39 rest m?

o Io 14. 27. Then prepare thy self, not to peace,
and. 16. 33. but vnto patience, and seeke for
p 1 Th. 5. 25 quietnesse not on earth, but in hea.
2 Th. 3. 16 uen, not amōg men, nor in the world,
Phi. 4. 7 but in God alone p.

q Rom. 8 Thou oughtest to indure all things
35. 36. &c. for Gods sake q, euen labours, griefs,
r cor. 13. 7. tentations, afflictions, troubles, need,
r 1 Cor. 6. sickness, injuries, euill-reports, repre-
4. 5. &c. hensions, oppressions, infamie, cor-
Phil. 4. 11 rection, contempt r.

22. &c. For these things inuite, as it were,
f 2 Tim. 2 vnto vertue; these try the young sol-
3. 5 diours of Iesus Christ; these bring

22 Tim. 4. to the crowne of blisse. To such a
7. 8. man I will giue for his small paines an
1 Pet. 5. 4 eternall reward, and for temporall
2 Mar. 5 shame, glory without end u.

10. 11. Thinkest thou alwaies to haue pro-
u Acts 5. 4 sperity at thine owne desire? Looke
He. 11. 8. 17 not for it: Mine old saints & seruants
y 1 cor. 6. 4 could neuer haue it, but they were
He. 11. 32. faine to suffer much trouble, mani-
33. &c. fould-tentations y, miserable ends z,

z Ma. 14. 10 which they indured patiently a, try-
He. 11. 37. sting rather vpon God than vpon man
a Rev. 7. 13 b, & counting the afflictions of this
b pla. 56. 11 present time, not worthy that glory
a Ro. 8. 18. which was to come c.

Now

*He that feareth God
of the Imitation of Christ. feareth not man*

Now wouldst thou haue that out of
hand, which so many with teares, and *d Ps. 27. 14*
long troubles could hardly attaine: and *31. 24*
Hope therefore in the Lord *d: bee 1 co. 13. 16*
strong, & giue not ouer disloyally, but *e Ro 8. 35*
valiantly imploy both thy body, and *36. &c.*
life for the glory of God *e. I will in f Reu. 2. 7*
the end most bountifully reward thee *Mat. 5. 12*
f, and in thy trouble assist thee *g. 5 ps. 91. 12*

CHAP. XLII.

*Against the vaine iudgement
of men.*

LORD.

CAST thy burthen constantly vp.
on the Lord *a my Sonne, and* *d ps. 55. 32*
feare not the iudgement of man *b, so* *e 1 Cor. 4*
long as thy conscience doth not con- *3. 4. 5*
demne thee *c.* *e 2 co. 1. 12*

It is expedient, and a blessed thing
to suffer on such wise *d: neither is it* *d Mt. 5. 10*
hard for an humble minde *e, and* *e Mat. 1. 29*
man that trusteth in the Lord, so to
deceiue *f.* *f 2 Cor. 6*

Many men say many things, and
therefore little regard should bee gi-
uen to them: and to please all is
impossible *g.* *g. 1. &c.*
Mal. 2. 17

And although Paul endeauoured

Renounce thy selfe, and
rective reward.

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Chap. 42

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h 1 Cor. 4 to please all men *h*, and make him selfe
12. 13. &c. all things to all men *i*, yet passed hee
1 i co. 9. 22 little to be iudged of man *h*.

k 1 cor. 4. 3 Hee did as much as lay in him to
1 i co. 9. 22 profite and salue others *i*, but for all

that he could not stay the slanderous
m 1 cor. 3 tongues of the wicked *m*; and there-

fore committed hee his whole cause
12. 13
n 1 cor. 4. 5 vnto the Lord *n*, who knew all, and

against the slanderous and backbiting
speeches of the vngodly hee defended
him selfe with patience and long suf-

ferings *o*.

Notwithstanding sometime he an-
1 i cor. 4. 12
1 Pet. 3. 20
2 i. &c. swered againe *p*, least the weakelings
p Act. 15 through his silence should be offen-

ded.
13. 14
and 26. 2
3. 4. &c. Why then fearest thou the sentence
of a mortall man, who being aliue to

day, may be dead to morrow *q*?
1 i cor. 9. 13
Phil. 1. 12 Feare God, and thou wilt not feare
13. 14 man *r*.

What hurt do any mans words and
q Si. 10. 11 iniuries to thee? Nay, him selfe hee
7 psal. 27. 1 hurterh rather; and shall not escape
and 56. 4 the iudgement of God, whosoeuer
he be *s*.

Have thou God alwaies before
r Ro. 14. 10
1 i cor. 5. 10 thine eyes; & contend not with quar-
1 i Pet. 2 relling words. And though now thou
19. 20 bee without cause defamed *t*, take it

for

not grieuously, neither by impatiency
diminish thy reward *a*, but rather *a* Mat. 5. 12
cast the eyes of thy minde vpon me in
heauen; who both can deliuer thee
from all infamy, and iniury of men *x*, *x* pl. 50. 15
and will reward euery one according
to his workes *y*. *y* Rom. 2. 6
Re. 22. 12

CHAP. XLIII.

That wee must wholly resigne ouer our
selues vnto God, if wee minde to
attaine vnto the freedome
of minde.

LORD.

MY Son, if thou forsake thy selfe
a, thou shalt finde me. *a* Luk. 9. 23

See thou challenge nothing to thy
selfe, nor haue nothing proper, and
alwaies thou wilt gaine *b*. For as soon *b* Mat. 18
as thou yeeldest vp thy selfe wholly
without reuocation, thou shalt be en-
dued with most excellent rewards *c*. *c* Luk. 19
19. 20

SERV. Lord, how oft shall I
yeeld vp, and wherein shall I forsake
my selfe? *d* Mat. 10. 18
19. 30

LORD. Alwaies, & euery houre;
both in small and great matters, I ex-
cept

cept nothing: my desire is to haue
d Mat. 23 thee renounce all things d. For how
44.45.46 canst thou be mine, & I thine, vnlesse
e Mat. 16 both inwardly and outwardly thou
39.42 haue left, and lost thine owne will?
Luk. 22.42 And this the sooner thou doest,
Ioh. 4.34 the better thou shalt speede: and the
Mat. 9.10 more thoroughly and sincerely, the
more thou shalt please me, and profit
f Mat. 24 thy selfe f.

45.46.47 Some there be, which giue ouer
and 25. 11 themselves, but it is with some ex-
12. &c. ception g. They doe not fully de-
g Luk. 9 pend on God, & therefore they study
59.60.61 how to prouide for themselves.

Others at the first renounce them-
selves wholly: but afterwarde when
tribulation or persecution commeth
h Mat. 23 h, they fall away, and so doe no good
20.21 at all.

These men shall neuer aspire either
vnto the true liberty of the minde, or
i 2 Co. 13.13 to the most comfortable benefite of
h Lu. 9.23 my familiarity i, vnlesse they wholly
l Ro. 12.1 renounce h, and daily sacrifice them-
m Mat. 16 selves h, without which none either
24. &c. can, or shall enioy the fauour of God.
Mar. 8.34 I haue said oftentimes, and now
Luk. 9.22 I say againe: Forsake, yeelde vp thy
n Mat. 12.9 selfe m, and thou shalt enioy the
& 16.24 sound quietnesse of minde n. Give
&c. the

of the Imitation of Christ.

the whole for the whole, call back nothing, keepe back nothing o. Abide o Luk. 18 vnfaignedly, and faithfully in me, and 22.23.&c. thou shalt haue mee, the freedome of p Mat. 25 mind, & deliuerance from darknes p. 35.&c.

Wherefore, let this be thy study, let q Luk. 9.23 this be thy prayer, wish continually r Rom. 6.6 that thou maist euen nakedly fol- s 2 Tim. 2. lew naked Iesus q, & dy to thy selfe, 11.12. to liue eternally with me s: Then shall t Psal. 1.1 both vaine imaginations t, and vile u Mat. 6. affections u, and superfluous cogita- 22.23. tions x, depart away: then both im. w 1 Cor. 7. moderate feare shall vade y, and in- 31.32 temperate loue consume away z. y 1 Cor. 4.18 z 1 Io. 2.17

CHAP. XLIII.

Of the right vse of outward things, and
that we should fly vnto God when
we are afflicted.

LORD.

MY Sonne, thou must haue a
speciall care, that thy mind
bee single and pure s, in euery s Mat. 6.
place, in euerie action, in all thy 22.23.
businessse: also, that all things serue
thee, and not thou them b, also that b Mat. 6.24
thou be not a slave, and bondman to
thine owne zētious c, but a master, a c Gal. 5.1
ruler, a free man, an Hebrue transla-
ted

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red into the lot and liberty of the sons
 d Gal. 4. 3 of God d, whose eyes are turned from
 7. 9. worldly e, and cast vpon heauenlie
 e Gal. 5. 13 things f, who looke vpon temporall
 f col. 3. 1. 2 things with the left, but with the
 right eye vpon eternall, who will not
 g 1 co. 6. 12 be brought vnder the power of any
 1 Ioh. 2. 15 thing g, but make all things to serue
 1 co. 10. 33 to good purpose, according to the
 h psal. 8. 6 order of almighty God the Creator
 7. 8. h, who hath done nothing (of all that
 i Ge. 1. 31 he did) in vaine i.

Furthermore, if in thy trouble thou
 wilt not sticke vnto outward things,
 nor with a carnall eye behold the
 things that are seene and heard : but
 with Moses in all thine affaires enter
 by and by into the tabernacle of the
 Lord k, doubtlesse thou shalt receiue
 k Ex. 33. 9 answered sometime, and returne in-
 Num. 7. 89 structed in things both present and
 to come.

For it was Moses wont in matters
 of controuersie, and difficult things,
 to go into the Tabernacle, and to be
 rid from the wickednesse of men hee
 l Ex. 33. 13 vsed prayer l, & the calling for Gods
 assistance. So oughtest thou to enter
 into the priuate closet of thine heart
 m Mat. 6. 9 m, and there most earnestly to call
 vpon G O D.

For

For we read that Ioshua, and the rest of the Israelites were therefore deceiued of the Gibeonites, because they counselled not with the mouth of the Lord, but gaue light credit to their faire tale.

CHAP. XLV.

*That man should not bee too importunate
in his matters.*

LORD.

Sonne, cast thy burden vpon mee, and in due time I will grant thy request.

Look vpon my cōmandements, & thou shalt find great profit thereby.

SERVANT. O my Lord, I willingly refer my whole cause to thee, for I finde that all my cares doe nought preuaile.

Oh that I were not so carefull of worldly things, but could euen out of hand vntainedly obey thee.

LORD. My sonne, many times a man desires a thing, which afterwarde hee mislikes when hee hath it once: Because the desires of one thing doe not long endure, but force you

a Psal. 55
22.

b Deu. 6. 3.

4. &c.

and 12. 21

Psal. 85. 8

c Mat. 25

26. &c.

1 Pet. 5. 7

d Luk. 5

11. 28

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you to couet after sundry and diuerse.

Wherefore it is no small thing for a man in smallest things to forsake himselfe, and he that will goe forward indeed, must viterly deny himselfe e, for he who so doth, is most at liberty and safe.

e Lu. 9. 23
& 14. 26
33.

f Re. 12. 9 But the old serpent f, an vtter enemy to good men g, ceaseth at no time g Mat. 13 from tempting h, but night and day 24. 25. &c. layeth snares to entrap, & ouerthrow l 1 Tim. 6 the simple.

9. 10.

Wherefore watch and pray l, that ye enter not into temptation.

1 Pe. 5. 8. 9
Mat. 26. 41

CHAP. XLVI.

That man hath nothing which good is, of himselfe, neither that he should glory of any thing.

SERVANT.

a Psal. 8. 4

Lord, what is man that thou art mindedfull of him a? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? What hath he deserued b, that thou shouldst regard him c?

b Ro. 11. 6
Ephe. 2. 8

c ps. 144. 3

O Lord, I may not complaine if thou doe reiect me d: neither reason with thee, if thou denie my requests.

But

Chap. 46 211 Ambition the poison of the soule
of the Imitation of Christ.

But thus may I truly both think
with my selfe, & say; Lord, I am no- *e 2 cor. 3. 5*
thing, I haue no goodnes of my selfe, *1 cor. 4. 7*
but naked came I out of my mothers *f Iob 1. 2*
wombe, and naked shall I returne *Eccle. 5. 14*
thither. *1 Tim. 6. 7*

If thou assist me not, and inwardly
instruct me, I faint viterly, & becom
dissolute g.

But thou, Lord, alwaies art one, *g ps. 51. 10*
and abidest the same for euermore *h, 1. 1. &c.*
thou art alwaies good i, righteous *k, hps. 102. 12*
and holy l; for thou doest all things *i, Esa. 44. 6*
well, righteously, purely, and with *k Psal. 5. 4*
wisdom m. *l De. 32. 4*
1. 1. ps. 1. 15

But I, alas, am more prone to com *m Psal. 134*
rather backward than forward: I co- *1. 2. &c.*
tinue not euermore at one stay n, be- *n Iob. 14*
cause I am subiect to alteration, like *1. 2*
the time.

Notwithstanding, if thou reach
forth thy helping hand, I shall speedi-
ly be comforted o, for thou without *o Psal. 16. 8*
mans aide canst assist, and so streng-
then mee, that my countenance no
more shall alter and change diuersly, *p Ps. 104. 2*
and my mind shall be fixed and waite
vpon thee alone.

Therefore did I knowe, while ei-
ther I couet the zeale of the spirit, or
am driven by some occasion to seeke
thee

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thee (for there is none that can comfort mee) how to contemne the comfort of this world *q*, doubtes I should both hope well of thy fauor, & looke with ioyfulness sometime for the gift of thy consolation *r*. Finally, if it fall out well with me, at any time, it is of thy goodnesse *s*. I am but vanity in thy sight *t*, of none account *u*, mortal & fraile *y*.

Whereof then do I boast? Or why and *49.10* couer I to be had in admiration? Euen of nothing *z*, but that is vanity. *9.10.14.12* Doubtlesse, a most pestilent & vaine thing ambition is, it both draweth *2.14* man away from the true glorie, and spoiles him viterly of Gods eternall fauour *a*.

For while man pleaseth himselfe, *Ec.10.7* he displeaseth thee *b*: while he seeketh the praise of men *c*, he leese the true *6.14* vertues of the minde.

But the true glory & true reioycing is, for a man to glory not of himselfe, but of thee *d*: and to reioyce of thy name, not of his vertue, or any thing besides, but onely for thy sake.

Wherefore praised bee thy Name, *2.17.18* not mine, extolled be thy works, not mine: let thy holy name bee magnified *e*, let me haue no praise at all.

Chap. 47. 213 *Praife God, and please God
of the Imitation of Christ.*

I will euermore glory in thy praise
f, of my selfe I will not, except it be of fpl. 106. 47
mine infirmitie: g. 2 co. 11. 3

Let the Jewes receiue honour one
of another h, I will seeke that which h Iob. 5. 44
commeth of God alone.

All the glory, the credite, the esti-
mation of this world, if it be compa-
red with that euerlasting glory of
thine i, what is it but meere vanitie,
and foolishnes k? 23. 24. 25
26

Wherefore, O my truth l, my mer-
cy, my God. O blessed Trinitie, to
thee be praile m, and honour, & glo-
ry, and power for euermore, Amen. 4 Ec. 10. 7
9. 12. &c.
1 Pl. 2. 5. 2
m Re. 5. 13
and 7. 12

CHAP. XLVII.

*That the praise of this world is to
be contemned.*

LORD.

BE not thou troubled my Sonne,
though thou see others extolled,
and esteemed, and thy selfe despised,
and contemned n. 4 Iam. 1. 3

Cast the eyes of thy mind vpon me,
and I warrant thee, thou wilt brooke
thy contempt well enough. 6 Mar. 9. 19

SERV. O Lord wee are blinde
and

e Gen. 6. 5 and alas, easily seduced with vanity c.
If I look well into my selfe, I am not
hurt of any thing, so that I haue no
cause to complain of thee at all d. But
for that I haue both many times and
griuously offended thee, all thy crea-
tures doe rightly arme themselves a-
gainst me a.

e Gen. 3
17. 18

Therefore praise and honour, and
glory belongeth to thee, but to men
shame and contempt f.

f Dn. 9. 7. 8
g pl. 123. 2
i Pet. 2. 31
h Mat. 11. 29
i 2 Tim. 2
11. 12

And except I frame my selfe pati-
ently to beate the contempt and de-
spight of all men g, I shal neuer attain
either a quiet mind h, the light of thy
Spirit, or thine everlasting society k.

CHAP. XLVIII.

That we must not rest or depend
vpon man.

LORD.

e Job 14. 37 **M**Y Sonne, if thou for amity and
friendship sake, repose any con-
fidence in man, neuer looke to bee
quiet and at rest a. But if thou betake
thy selfe vnto the immortall and euer-
lasting truth b, at the departure of thy
friend, thine hart wil not be troubled.

On

Chap. 48. 215 Be humble, and get honor
of the Imitation of Christ.

On me should thy loue bee ground-
ed, and for my sake ought euery
good man to be loued, & the more
dearly. c 1 Pet. 3. 8

Without me friendship cannot last,
neither is it true and pure loue, which
I couple not together. 9
1 Pet. 2.
1 Thc. 3. 2
1 Ioh. 2. 17

So mortified shouldest thou bee
from these affections, that as touch-
ing thy selfe, thou shouldest seeme to
be without all comfort d. 18.
d Mat. 10

So much the higher is man to God,
as hee is farther from the comfort of
this world: and so much the more
highly doth he ascend vp to God, as
the more deeply he descendeth into,
and despiseth himselfe e. 35.
1 cor. 7. 31

But hee who arrogates any good
thing to himselfe, letteth the fauor of
God from dwelling within him. e Phil. 2. 5.
e 7. 8cc.

For the holy Spirit doth alwaies
seeke a meeke and humble mind f. f 1 Pet. 3. 6

Couldst thou once bring thy selfe
into nothing, and renounce the loue
of this world g, surely I would come,
and poure vpon thee most singular
benefits. But while thou lookest vpon
creatures, thou losest the sight of the
Creator h. g 1 Ioh. 2
1 Ioh. 11. 15
h 1 Iam. 4. 4.

Learn in all things to master thy
selfe for thy Makers sake, so shalt
thou

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thou attaine vnto the knowledge of
of God.

¶ Mat. 10. 37. and. 23. 1. 2. &c. Even the vilest thing loued, and
looked vpon vndiscreetly, doth de-
file a man, and hinder him from hap-
pinesse.

CHAP. XLIX.

Againest vaine & worldly knowledge.

LORD.

MY Son, be not thou carried a-
way with the faire and subtil
speech of man. For the kingdome of

God is not in word, but in power a.
b. pl. 119. 97. Listen to my words, for they in-
c. Pla. 119. flame the minde b, lighten the vnder-
120. 105. standing c, set men on fire d, & bring
Pla. 19. 7. 8. the true comfort e.
d. le. 23. 19. Reade nothing with a minde to
e. pla. 19. 8. seeme the more learned onely, or
and 119. wise: but to mortifie thy sinnes. For
50. 111. this will more profit thee, than the
knowledge of many obscure & hard
f. 1. cor. 3. 3. questions f.

Though thou haue read much, yet
at the last thou must bee faine to come
g. Lu. 10. 42. to one principle g.

I onely teach men wisdom, and

of the Imitation of Christ.

I (not men) giue vnderstanding to
the simple h; so that they, whom I h Pro. 1.4
speake vnto, doe easily prouue wise, and 2.6
and profit much in the spirit. Mat. 11.26

Woe to them who seek manie
things of man, and neglect the way
to serue me s.

Mat. 23

The time will com, when the Ma- 23 24 &c.
ster of masters, the Lord of Angels, e-
uen I shall appeare, to take an ac-
count of all men, and to examine the k Mat. 25
conscience of euery one k: then will 19 20 &c.
I search Ierusalem with lightes l, and 31.32 &c.
discouer those things which lay hid l Zep. 1.12
in darknes m, at what time tongues m I co. 4.5
shall cease, and knowledge doe no n 1 cor. 13
good n. 8.

I euen I doe so lift vp the humbled o Mat. 10
minde, that in a moment it shall con- 19 20
ceiue more knowledge of the eter. p. Mar. 13.30
nall truth o, then any man by tenne Luke 21 7
yeares studie can attaine vnto. 14.15.

I teach neither ianglingly to dis- Mat. 5.3
pute, nor diuersitie of opinions to 4. &c.
distract, nor ambitiously to get fame, q Lu 9.23
nor contentiously to obtaine victo- r Mat. 6.35
rie, by force of argument. / Ioh. 8.

I teach how to despise the world p: 50.54.
to loath things present q; to seeket t Man. 5.
sauiour eternall r, to shew vaine glory s, 44.45.
to suffer iniuries t: to trust in mee u; u lo. 34.12

M.

with

The third booke

a Ioh. 14 without meeto couer nothing *a*, and
14. to loue mee highly and zealously *a*.
7 Mat. 10. bome ally.

37. For by louing mee, some haue so
 professed in heauenly things, that to
 the admiration of men they haue spo-
2 Mat. 13 ken *z*, and haue gotten more by for-
21. saking all *a*, then by any study.

a Mt. 19. 27 But to some I speake common, to
b Mat. 13. other speciall things, to some I com-
10. 11 fortably appeare in outward signes
Mar. 4. 11. and figures to others my secrets ap-
e Ioh. 5. 36 peare as clearely as the light *b*.

d 2 Cor. 3. The Scriptures indeed speake one
14. 15 and the same thing *c*, yet teach they
e Ioh. 8. 6 not all men alike *d*: but I teach truth
7. 8. in the inwarde parts *e*. I search the
f Reu. 2. 22 hart *f*, and I knowe the thoughts that
g Mar. 26 pricke forward to well doing *h*, and
14. 35 giue to euery man that which is need-
h Phi. 2. 13 full *i*.

i 3 Cor. 11

4. 5. &c.

CHAP. L.

*That wee should not conet after earthly
 and outward things.*

LORD.

a 1 Cor. 3 **M**y Son, remember that thou bee
1. 2 ignorant of many things *a*, and
 that thou esteeme thy selfe but for a
 dead man in this world, euen for
 him

Chap. 50 219 Care for eternall, conseruet
of the Imitation of Christ. temporall things

him to whom the whole world is cru-
cified b. Thou must ouerpasse much b Gal. 6. 14
as though thou heardest not; and
thinke alwaies on that which belongs
to thy peace c. c Luk. 3. 9

Better it is to turne from those 42
things which mislike thee, and to let
euery man haue his owne saying, the
to contend with brawling words d. d Rom. 13

If thou bee at a good point with 13
God, and haue his indgement al-
waies in thy minde e, thou shalt the e Ec. 18. 23
more easily beare, if thou bee ouer-
come.

SERV. O Lord, to what passe
are wee come? Behold, if wee lose a
temporall thing, we lament, for a lit-
tle profit we run & labor, yea though
it be all the night long, but the losse
of our soules we viterly forget f. That f Mat. 26
which little, if any thing at all, pro- 26
firs, wee seeke after, but that which is Luk. 9. 27
most necessarieg, we viterly neglect, g Luk. 10
so gladly doth man addict him whole 41. 42
lie vnto outward things, and with-
out speedy repentance welter in the h 1 Ioh. 2
same h. 13

Leave this world, and
love God.

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Chap. 51

CHAP. LI.

That every man is not to be credited, and
that by words wee easily
offend.

SERVANT.

Pf. 60. 11 **O** Lord help me now in this trouble: for vain is the help of man *a*.

b Pf. 108 How often haue I beene deceiued
12 where I lookt for faith? Againe there
epf. 37. 39 I haue found it, where I lookt for
d 1 1 hel. none, So vaine is the trust in men *b*:
13. 2 but in thee, O God alone the saluati-
1 The. 5. 13 on of the righteous doth consist *c*.

Wee thanke thee *d*, O Lord, our
God, for all whatsoever beiderth vs
miserable and weake ones, which are
easily deceiued and changed with a
little.

What man is he that so wisely and
circumspectly behaues himselfe in all
things that he is neuer deceiued, nor
commeth into danger *e*?

e Iam. 3. 2 Yea, he who trusteth in the Lord *f*,
f pl. 125. 1 and ferueth him with a simple minde,
doth not so easily and soone offend:
& though he fall sometime into trou-
bles, and perills, yet either speedily
here

he escapeth, or is strengthened, so that
hee can endure them. For thou Lord
continuest with them vnto the ende
who put their trust in thee g.

g Psal. 31

Hard it is, yea doubtlesse it is very
hard to finde such faithfull friends as
will stick by vs in all extremities: but
thou Lord, thou onely art faithfull
in all things, neither is any like vnto
thee i.

1.24

Psal. 94.14

and 7.11

h De. 32.4

i Deu. 32

39

Oh how wise was that good soule,
that saide, My minde is rooted, and
built in Christ k! were I at that stay,
my mind so easily would not be trou-
bled with worldly feare l; neither
should the darts of bitter wordes m
disquiet me.

l Psal. 56

4.12

m Psal. 6.4

But who can foresee all things?
Who can auoide miseries to come?
Now, if things though foreseen, hurt
many times, how much more grie-
uously will things nothing foreseen
annoy?

But alas, wretch that I am, why
haue I not better looked to my selfe?
Either, why so lightly haue I put con-
fidence in others? Hereby we declare
our selues to bee men, and that fraile
men too, albeit many vnrighly ac-
count, and flatteringly doe call vs
Angels.

n Iam. 5. 2

M 3

Whom

*Trasling man, but beleue
the Lord*

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Chap. 51

The third booke

whom shall I credit, Lord, whom?
but only thee, who art the very truth,
and canst neither deceiue, nor be de-
ceiued o.

• Job. 14. 9

Rom. 3. 4

p Psal. 119

11

Rom. 3. 4

q Lam. 3. 2

Eccl. 14. 1

and 25. 8

For all men doubtlesse be lyers p,
and weak, and vnconstant, and fraine,
especially in words q, that rashly hand
ouer head, euery thing may not bee
credited, whatsoeuer colour of truth
it beare.

r Mat. 10

17

s Micah. 7. 6

Mat. 10. 36

t Mat. 24

34

Mar. 13. 31

Therefore not without great cause
and wisdom thou diddest forewarne
to beware of men r, and foretell, that
a mans enemies should bee those of
his houshold s, and say that such are
not to be belieued, who say t, Lo here
he is, or there he is.

This haue I learned to my losse,
God graunt I may prooue the more
wise, not foolish thereby.

Play the wise man, said one, play
the wise man, and that I tell you, keep,
to your selfe. Which thing I did, thin-
king none should haue vnderstood
the same: but afterward hee that wil-
led mee to be silent, could not keepe
it secret himselfe, but forthwith be-
wrayed himselfe, and betrayed me.

• Psal. 120

2. 3

From such tattlers, and vndiscreet
men, O Lord, deliuer mee u, that I
may neither fall into their hands,
nor

nor follow their kind of dealing. Let
my mouth utter continually the
truth *a*, and remooue away farre fro *a* Pro. 8. 7
mee a dissembling tongue *y*. For my *y* p^l. 34. 13
parte is not to doe that to another, *z* Mat. 7. 12
which I would not haue done to my *Luk. 6. 31*
selfe *z*. *Tob. 4. 15*

Oh how good is it, and what quietnes doth it bring to say nothing of others, nor to beleene euery thing, to speak little, to open our selues but to few, to seeke after thee, which knowest our minds *a*, not to bee carried *a*. *Ro. 8. 27*
bout with euery blast of words: but *Ioh. 3. 23*
to couet, that all, both inwarde, and
ourward things may bee finished and
brought about according to thy will
and commandement *b*. *1 Iam. 2*

Oh, how necessarie to the keeping *18. 19*
still of Gods fauour is it, to shue the
pompe of this world, not to couet
those things which are wonderfull in
fight *c*, but to follow, and with all di. *c* *Lu. 16. 25*
ligence to pursue that which may
bring vs both to amendment of life, *d* *Tit. 6. 11*
and to zeale of godlinesse *d*. *2 Ti. 2. 23*

How many hath vertue knowne, *Tit. 2. 12*
and ouer hastily commended, endamaged!
Againe, to how many hath
the same done good, beeing vsed in *e* *Esa. 30*
silence *e*, in this miserable life, *15*

The third books

which is altogether counted a temptation and misery f.

flob.7.1
&c.

CHAP. LIJ.

*That wee ought to repose our confidence
in the Lord, when wee are pierced with
the darts of slanderous tongues.*

LORD.

MY Sonne, shew thy selfe con-
stant, and trust in mee. For
what bee words, but words? which
flie about the ayre, yet hurt not so
much as a stone?

If thou art faulty, amend thy selfe;
if not guilty of any crime, studie to
suffer the slander patiently for Gods
sake. At the least bear with ill words
sometime, though as yet thou canst
beare no great blowes.

Why doe such trifling things dis-
quie thee, but onely because thou art
carnall as yet, and haſt more regard
of men, then is meet?

26. For because thou fearest to be con-
 Luk. 12. 4. tained, thou wilt not be reprehended
 for thy faults; but seekest the
 shadowes of excuses. But looke thou
 more earnestly into thy selfe, and
 thou

of the Imitation of Christ.

thou shalt see that both the world, & a vain care to please men & doth line Gal. 1. 10 within thee.

For by shunning to be corrected & blamed for thine offences, thou giuest most euident arguments, that thou art not truly modest, and that neither thou art rightly dead to the world, nor the world to thee. e Gal 6. 14

But listen thou vnto my words, and thou wilt not passe vpon the words, yea of ten thousand men f. Rom. 6. 3

What if all the worst wordes that may be inuented were spoken against thee? they could not hurt thee one ior. if thou wouldest beare g, and esteeme them but as motes. For they cannot pluck so much as an haire from thine head h. f Psal. 3. 6

But hee who is either weak of courage, or wicked of conuersation, is easily moued with euill words. But he that trusteth in mee, and dependeth not vpon his owne indgement, is voyde of this worldly and fleshlie feare i. g Mat. 5. 31

For I both iudge and know all secrets k. I know what and how euery thing is done l. I know both who offereth, and who suffereth iniurie. h 2 Sam. 14. 11. k 1 Cor. 5. 5 l Ren. 2. 23

This proceedeth from me & through my

The third booke

m Amos 3.6. my permission **m**, that the thoughts of many harts may be opened **n**.

Mat. 10 I will iudge both the guilty, & the
ro. 18. & c. guiltlesse **o**; but first it is my mind to
n Lu. 2. 35. trie them both by a secret iudge-
e 1 cor. 4 ment.

ro. The witnesse of man deceueth **p**
Ioh. 5. 29 manytimes; but my iudgement is
p pl. 116. 11 true **q**, & shall neuer be overthrowen.
q Ro. 2. 2 But that commonly is hidden, and
and. 3. 4 known but of a few **r**; yet for all
r pla. 36. 6. that it neuer doth, or can erre, all be it
p al. 19. 9. in the iudgement of fooles it seeme
and 67. 40. scarce indifferent.

Therefore it is good to appeale vn-
to mee in euery iudgement. and not
r M. 7. 1. 2 to follow private affection **s**.

Ro. 2. 1. 2. 3. The righteous man is neuer moo-
1 co. 4. 3. 4 ued **n**, by any crosse that God doth
s Psal. 9. 1 send; neither doth hee either greatlie
4. 5. & 6. way flinderous reports, nor vainely
reioyce when hee is excused by other

men. For hee considereth that I am
s Psal. 7. 9 he who search the harts, & the reins **s**,
Reu. 2. 23. and iudge not according to the out-
7 Ro. 2. 11 ward perion, or appearance **y**. For that
1 Ect. 1. 7 commonly I condemne **z**, which in
7 Luk. 16 the iudgement of man is commen-
15. ded.

S E R V. O Lord God, who art
a righteous Iudge, strong and patie-
ent

Chap. 53. 217 No man's righteousness, but God
 of the Imitation of Christ. mercy doth saue vs
 ent, knowing the frailty and wicked-
 nes of men, be thou my strength, and
 confidence. a: For mine owne con- a Pla. 7. 1
 science will not serue mee b: thou and 16. 3
 knowst that which I know not. Ther- b 1 Cor. 4
 fore my part was to humble my selfe 3. 4
 when I was reprooued, and to take it
 patiently c: which I haue not shown: a Psa. 13
 forgive me d, O Lord of thy mercy, 16. 3. 15. 5.
 and so blesse me, that hereafter I may d Mat. 6. 12
 shew my selfe more patient. For thy
 singular mercy e dooth more serue e Rom. 3. 2
 to the attainment of pardon, than
 the opinion of mine owne righteous-
 nesse to the defence of my secret con-
 fidence. And albeit I thinke my selfe
 cleere from sinne, yet am I not there-
 by iustified f. For without thy mercy f 1 cor. 4. 4
 no man can be saued g. g Psa. 143. 2

CHAP. LIII.

That for the attainment of everlasting
 life, all manner of trouble must
 be endured.

LORD.

MY son, let neither trouble break
 thee, nor aduersity. Iustained for
 my sake, throw thee down, but com-
 fort

fort and confirme thy telfe in all ex-
a 1 cor. 10 tremities with my promise a, who am
13 able enough to giue thee most ample
b 1 am. 1. 17 and infinite rewards b.

Reu. 1. 10 Long thou shalt not labour here in
23. 26 this world c, neither bee afflicted al-

Reu. 3. 5 waies. Hope a while longer d, and

e He. 10. 7 thou shalt see a speedy dispatch of all

d Re. 3. 11 euills, and the time will shortly come
when there shall bee neither troubles.

e Reu. 6. nor tumults any more e. Little is it

7. 17 and short, whatsoeuer by time com-

and 21. 4 meth to an end.

Wherefore goe to, as thou dost, la-
bour faithfully in my Vineyard, and
f Mat. 10. 8 I will be thy reward f.

Reu. 12. 11 Write thou, meditate, sing, sigh,
keepe silence, pray, suffer aduersitie,
with courageous heart: For doubtles
euerlasting felicity deserueth all these,
g Ro. 8. 18 yea and greater conflicts g.

One day, God knowes how soon,
quietnes will come, & then shall there
be neither day, neither night, as now
there is, but light perpetuall without
end, brightnes infinite without com-
prehension, peate which neuer shall
h Esa. 60 decay, and quietnes which euermore
10. 20 shall last h. Then thou wilt not say:
Reu. 21. 23 O that I were deliuered from the bo-
and 22. 5 dy of this death i, neither cry out on
i Ro. 7. 24 this

this wise k; Woe is me that I dwell so k Pl. 1. 10
long in this world! For then both 5.6
death shall be destroyed l, and salua- l Hos. 13. 14
tion shall appeare which neuer shall 1 co. 15. 55
haue end m, there no anguish n; but m Reu. 20
blessed ioy, and sweete and vertuous 6. 14
company shall be. n Re. 21. 4

Oh, diddest thou beholde the euer- o Iam. 1. 12
lasting crowne o, or the glory wher- Reu. 2. 10
with they, who in this world were p 1 co. 4. 10
contemned p, and thought not wor- Heb. 11. 33
thy to liue, do triumph withal, doubt- 34. 35
lesse thou wouldest forthwith debase
thy selfe euen to the ground, and de-
sire rather to bee in subiection to all
men, than to rule but one: thou woul-
dest not couet many merry daies in
this world q, but reioyce in suffering q phi. 1. 3
troubles for the name of God r, and r Act. 5. 42
think it great gaine to be contemned
among men.

Now, if thou couldest brooke these
things, and let them sinke into thy
minde, thou wouldest not once com-
plaine s. For are not all troubles to be s Ro. 12. 12
sustained for eternall life sake t? or is t co. 6. 4
it so small a thing to get or to forgoe Iam. 1. 12
the kingdome of heauen u? u Ro. 8. 18
Lift vp thine eyes, man, vnto hea- 35. 36
uen: beholde with mee how all my u Mat. 6. 26
Saints who haue past the sharpe con-

The third booke

a Mar. 25. sights of the world, reioice now a, how
 22. 23. 24 they now see comfort, how they see
 Luk. 16. 25 where they would see, how they rest
 9 Reu. 7. 14 and shall ever rest with mee in the
 15. 16. 17 kingdome of my Father y.
 and 21. 4

23. 24. 25

CHAP. LIIII.

*Of the happines of the life to come,
 and of the miseries of this
 present world.*

SERVANT.

a Reu. 21 **O** Most blessed mansion of the e-
 10. 11. 12 ternall City a, O most bright
 &c. day of euerlastingnesse, the which is
 b Esa. 49. & neuer obscured by any night b, but
 60. 19. 20 alwaies enlightened with the most
 Reu. 7. 15 glorious truth. A day of continuall
 and 21. 25 ioy, of continuall quietnes, and hap-
 c Psal. 43. 3 py state of perpetuity.
 Phi. 3. 7. 8 Oh that that day had once appea-
 red c, and that this world had once an
 end.

That day doublelesse shineth to the
 d Hea. 12. 13 Saints in perpetuall cleerenesse, but
 e 1 cor. 13 yet a far off d, and as it were darkly e,
 12 because they see Pilgrimes in this
 f 1 pe. 2. 11 world f as yet.

Heb. 11. 13 The Citizens of heauen they see
 the

of the Imitation of Christ.

the ioyfullneffe of this day: but the
 banished children of Eue do sigh, be-
 cause the day of this life, both short,
 and euill f, is full of troubles, and dis- f Ge. 47. 9
 quietnesse g, full of griefe & anguish: Psa. 39. 5
 where man defileth himselfe with so g Gene. 3
 many sins, intangleth himselfe with 16. 27
 so many euils, is troubled with Eph. 6.
 so many feares, busied with so manie 11. 12
 cares, with much curiosity distracted, 2 Tim. 3. 1
 enwrapped with much vanity, enco- 2. 3. 4. 5
 sed about with such errors; consumed
 with such labour, oppressed with ten-
 tations, weakned with pleasures, and
 vexed with pouerty h,

h 2 cor. 11

Oh when shall these manifold trou- 23. 24 25
 bles haue an end? When shall I bee &c.
 deliuered from this miserable serui-
 tude of sinne? O Lord, when shall I
 think but onely vpon thee? when shal
 I reioyce my fill in thee? when shall i psa. 16. 11
 I without all manner let, without all
 griefe either of minde, or bodie k, k Rom. 7
 enioy true libertie, and peace on all 23. 24
 sides be founte peace peace, I meane Phil. 1. 23
 contiouall, and trusty, peace within
 and peace without, and peace on all
 sides without disturbance l,

l Reu. 21. 4

O good Iesus, when shall I behold 23. 24. 25
 thee face to face: when shall I con- and 22. 3
 template the glory of thy kingdom? 4. 5.

when

The third booke

m 1 co. 15. when wilt thou be all in all m, to mee?
28.

or when shall I bee with thee in thy
kingdome, which thou hast prepared
for thy beloued from the foundati-
ons of the world n?

n Mat. 25

34.

I am left here euen succourless as a

1 cor. 2.9 banished man in the land of mine e-

n Eph. 6. 10 nemies, where continuall warre is o,

21. 12. and much misery p. O giue me com-

1 pe. 5. 8. 9 fort in my banishment, & ioy in my

p Ge. 47. 9 trouble, in as much as with all the
desire of minde I sigh and long for

q pl. 27. 13 thee q. For all the comfort which this

and. 42. 12 world doth minister, is euen burden-

r Gal. 6. 14 some to me n.

s phil. 1. 23 To enioy thee is all my desire s, yet

can I not apprehend thee. I wish to

abide in heauently things, yet earth-

n Wild. 9 ly and vnmortified affections t keepe

14. 15

mee downe. In minde I would subdue

all things, yet against my will I am

n Rom. 7 compelled to serue the flesh u. Thus,

19. 23.

unhappy man that I am, I fight with

my selfe, and am grievous to my selfe

whilest my spirit soareth vpward, and

n Rom. 8. 5 my flesh bendeth downward n. Oh

and 7. 23. what discomfort feele I inwardly y,

y Gal. 5. 17 when meditating of heauently things

I am assaulted suddenly euen with a

swarme of carnall cogitations?

Wherefore, O my God, forsake me

not

of the Imitation of Christ.

not, neither cast mee away in thy displeasure **z**. Oh scatter with the brightness of thy lightening all the imaginations which the enemy doth cast in, shoot forth thine arrowes and disperse them **a**. Call home my senses **a** **psl. 144. 6** vnto thee; make mee to forget all worldly things, and to throwe away and contemne the cogitations of wickednesse.

O succor me, eternall verity **b**, that **b** **psa. 43. 2** no worldly vanitie may carry mee **a**. **Ioh. 14. 6** way! O come celestially sweetnes, that all vncleannesse may auoide at thy comming **c**. **epi. 68. 1. 2**

This also I am to craue at thy hands, that it would please thee mercifully to pardon, and forgieue mee though I haue other things in my minde when I pray, besides thee: For to say the truth, I am wont greatly to bee distracted, and many times there am I not, where bodily I sit, or stand, but whither my cogitations cary me. Verily there I am where my cogitation is. Where my thoughts are commonly, there is that I loue. And that which either I loue naturally, or customably doe like, comes easily into my mind.

This made thee, O truth **d**, to say **d** **Ioh. 14. 6**
Where

The third booke

Where your treasure is, there will
 e Mat. 6. 21 your hearts bee. If I loue heaven, I
 will gladly thinke on heavenly things;
 if the world, in prosperitie I am iocund,
 f Rom. 8. 5 and persue in aduersity; if the
 flesh, mine imaginations are fleshly; if
 the Spirit, to thinke on spirituall
 things will be my delight. For what-
 soeuer I loue, I gladly both speak of,
 and heare of, and thinke thereof ear-
 nestly when I am at home.

Wherefore vndoubtedly hee is an
 happy man, who for thy sake, O Lord
 doth forsake all things g, offer violence
 27. 28. 29 to nature h, & crucifie his carnall af-
 fectiōs i, through the zeale of the
 spirit, that his conscience being at qui-
 et k, he may offer vnto thee the sacri-
 fice of deuout prayer, and be meet to
 be admitted into the company of an-
 gels l, all earthly things being exclu-
 ded m both inwardly & without.

g Mat. 19
 27. 28. 29
 Luk. 9. 11.
 and. 9. 25
 h Mat. 11
 11.
 i Col. 3. 4. 5.
 Gal. 6. 14
 k Heb. 6. 14
 l He. 10. 34
 m Rom. 6.

35. 36.
 n Cor. 9
 24. 25.

CHAP. LV.

Of the desire of eternall life, and of the
 good things promised to such as fight.

LORD.

MY sonne, seeing thou percei-
 uest thy selfe to bee indued
 from aboue, with a desire
 of

of eternall happinesse, and couerest to
goe from the tabernacle of thy body
a, thereby to beholde the brightnesse
of my glory without shadow of
turning b, open thy minde, and receiue
with greedinesse this holy inspiration.
1.2
2 Per. 1.13
14
b 1a. 1.17

Giue high thanks & vnto almighty God
for dealing so graciously with thee,
for visiting thee so mercifully, for
stirring thee vp so zealously, for
helping thee so mightily, that of
thine owne weight thou fall not down
vnto earthly things d.

d Wis. 9

Neither shalt thou attaine thereunto
by thine owne endeouours & cogitations,
but by the meer grace and fauour of
God: and as in all other vertues thou
shouldest goe forward, so especially
increase in modestie, prepare thy
selfe vnto battels to come and endeavour
to cleane to mee with all thy strength,
and to serue me alwaies with a burning
affection.

14.15

e Rom. 5

10.21

Phil. 4.13

f Lu. 9.23

1 Tim. 6

11.12

2 Tim. 2.2

g Deu. 6.5

My sonne, the fire burneth many times,
yet neuer dooth the flame ascend
without smoake: so diuerse burne with
desire of heauenly things, and yet are
they not free from the tentations of
carnall affections, and therefore for the
onely glory of God they

Mat. 22.37

a Mar. 12

29.30

Luk. 10.7

h Ecc. 1.2

Mat. 13

20.21

The third booke

John 6 they craue not those things & the pa-
26.27 tient bearing whereof they desire so
& 12.3.6 earnestly at his hands.

Such also many times is your de-
fire, which for all that you pretend to
be most sincere. But that is not pure
and perfect, which any way seeketh
after priuate commoditie.

Mat. 6. Craue not that which may bring
24.25 either profit or pleasure to thy selfe,
1 cor. 13.5 but what is acceptable in my sight,
Mat. 6 and for the aduancement of my glo-
9.10. & 26 rie. For if thou haue a right iudge-
39.42 ment, thou wilt preferre and follow
Luk. 21.42 my decree before thy desire, yea or
whatsoever may be desired.

I know thy desire, and I haue heard
thy often growings. Thou wouldest
presently enjoy the glorious freedom
of the sonnes of God. Presently
thou art delighted with the everla-
sting house and celestiall countrie re-
plenished with all ioy. But that hour
is not yet come, and the time is yet
otherwise, even a time of warre, of
labour, and of triall. Thou wishest
that once thou haddest attained the
chiefe felicitie: but yet thou canst
not haue the same.

Phi. 1.33 I am he, saith the Lord, whom thou
must looke for, vntill the kingdom of
God

of the Imitation of Christ.

God do come. Yet longer thou must be tried in the world, and exercised in many things. Sometime I know *Eccl. 2. 1* thou shalt be comforted, but not fully and continually. Wherefore shew thy selfe constant and valiant, both in dooing and also in suffering things contrarie vnto nature. *2. 5*

Thou must put on the new man, *2. 3* and change thy conditions. And many times thou must both doe those things which thou wouldest not, *Eph. 3. 13* and omit that which thou wouldest doe. *Ep. 4. 24* *Rom. 6. 4* *col. 3. 9. 10* *Mat. 11. 12*

Others in their dealings shall prosper, but thou shalt not, the sayings of other men shall be heard, thine shall be contemned. Other men shall obtain their suites quietly, but thou shalt suffer the repulce: others with mighty commendations shall be extolled, but no word shall be made of thee. Other men shall be preferred vnto his offices, but they shall iudge thee to be good for nothing. For these causes thy nature will be troubled sometime and suffer great conflicts: but much good shalt thou get thereby, bearing it in silence. *2. 7* *Rom. 7* *16. 19* *Pla. 73* *1. 1. &c.* *Mat. 10* *12. 17. &c.* *Pla. 12. 2* *Iohn 15* *18. 19* *1 co. 1. 28* *Esa. 30. 13*

By these and such like, the faithfull servant of the Lord is tried oftentimes,

The third booke

times whether hee can denie, and breake himselfe of his owne will in all things g.

g Luk. 9
23.24

And surely thou hast most need to be mortified therein; namely. to see & to suffer those things which naturally thou canst not brook, especially when things, in thy iudgement, absurd and hurtfull, are enioyned thee b.

b Mat. 26
39.42

Luk. 22.42

Iob. 5.34

and 5.30

Iob 6.28

Eph. 6.6

Rom. 14.1

Phil. 2.10

Rom. 13.1

2 Pet. 2.13

14

1 Cor. 13.7

Act. 5.40

45

Wherein, forasmuch as thou darest not resist the higher power, wherunto thou art subiect, it seemeth hard in thine opinion to obey the commandment of another, and not to follow thine own mind.

Consider thou, my sonne, what commendation, and what an ample reward will be to thy follow these labors of thine. & how lesse thou wilt be so far from sustaining them grievously, that most sweete, and great comfort thou wilt take of thy patience k.

For in steede of thy momentanie will, which gladly thou hast renounced, thou shalt have an everlasting will in the heavens l. There whatsoever thou wouldest have, or canst wish for, thou shalt find m. There abundance of all good things thou shalt haue, without feare of losing them. There thy will together with mee shall ne-

l Iob. 17.14

2 Iob. 2.17

m 1 Cor. 2

9.10

Chap. 55. 239 The glorious estate of the godly
of the Imitation of Christ.

ner, couet after any outward or pri-
uate thing. No man there shall re- Ioh. 17.
sist thee, no man complaine of thee, 24.
no man trouble thee any manner of
way, but what thou canst desire shall
be present, and satisfie the desire of p Re. 7. 14.
thy minde abundantly p. 15. 16 17

There will I render glory for Re. 21. 4. 23
proach sustained q, the garment of 25. 16
gladnesse for heavinesse, for the low 22. 6
est room, a kingly throne for ever- 25.
more f. There the fruite of obedience 1. 2. 3.
shall appeare t, the labour of repen- Eccl. 8. 4.
tance shall reioyce u, & humble obe- Mat. 23. 34
dience shall gloriously be crowned x. Re. 22. 14

Wherefore, doe thou modestly 1. 1. 1.
bey all meny. and neuer care who Exec. 18
speakes or commandeth, but give 11. 22
thine earnest endeouour to take it in x 2 Tim. 2
good worth, whatsoever is spoken, & 11. 12.
faithfully to fulfill that whatsoever is Col. 3. 4
required at thine hands, howsoever it y 1 Pet. 3
be, either by word or signe, yea who- 13.
soever, be he thy better, or thy equall,
or thy inferiour that would haue it
done.

Let other men seeke other things,
let others glory in what they will, and 2 Mat. 9
be commended of the world euen 11. 14
to the skies: but do thou reioyce whe Act. 5. 41.
thou art reproched z, when thou dost Gal. 6. 4.
execute

31 cor. 1. 3 execute my will *y*, and promote my glory, and let this be thine onely desire, that God may be magnified alwayes in thee, whether it be by life or
2 Phi. 1. 30 by death *z*.

CHAP. LVI.

*How a man oppressed with troubles
ought to yeeld himselfe to
the Lords will.*

SERVANT.

O Eternal God, and heavenly Father, I yeelde thee immortall thanks, for that thou doost what thou wilt *a*, and wilt nothing but that is good *b*.
Let me thy seruant reioyce in thee, not either in my selfe, or in any other thing *d*. For thou alone art the true comfort, thou art my hope and my crowne, thou Lord art my ioy and mine honour *e*. Of thee I haue whatsoeuer I haue, and that not for any merits at all of mine. Thine are all things *f*, which thou hast eyther giuen *g*, or made *h*. I poore soule, worne out with labors euen from my youth, am grieued in minde *i*, and that in such wise, that sometime I burst

Chap. 6. 241 In affliction fly vnto God
of the Imitation of Christ.

burst forth into teares, and am greatly out of quiet for the euils which hang ouer mine head.

O Lord, I long after the comfort of peace : it is the peace of thy children, who are fed with the light of thy consolation / that I require. 1 Psal. 119.

If thou giue peace, if thou fill me 130.
with ioy m, my hart shall reioyce ex- m Luk. 15.
ceedingly, & deuoutly sound out thy 22.23.
praises n : but if (as many times thou n Psal. 149.
doost) thou hidest thy face o, I shall 1.2.&c.
not be able to runne the way of thy o pl. 119.32
commandements p, but rather fal- p Lu. 8.13.
ling on my knees I shall smite my
breast q, because it goeth not with me q Psal. 17.8
as earst it did, when thy lanterne light-
ening mee from aboue, I was vnder
the shadow of thy wings r, protected r Psal. 11
against euils that rushed vppon 3.4.&c.
mee s. s pl. 55.2.3.

O righteous Father alwaies to bee
prayed, the houre is now comes, s Ioh 12.
wherein I thy seruant must be tryed. 23.&c. L. 17
O Most louing Father, meet is it
that I suffer somewhat for thy sake n, n Mat. 5.10
at this time. O Father euermore to
bee worshipped, the houre is now
come which from euerlasting thou
diddest know would come, wherein
I for a little time must outwardly lo
N. dic.

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die, that inwardly I may liue with thee for euermore ; for a little while be contented to perish, as it were in mans opinion, and bee afflicted with griefe and aduersity, that hereafter in the morning of the new light *a*, I may rise againe with thee, and be glorified in the heauens *7*. O most holy Father, such was thy decree, such is thy pleasure, and that which thou commandedst *7* is come to passe.

2 Ioh. 16 For this benefit thou bestowest
2. 16. vpon thy friend, that albeit for thy
1 Pet. 2. 14 sake he must suffer affliction *a*, in this
1 Pet. 2. 21 world, yet is it but when, & of whom, and as thou wilt giue leave. For in the world nothing cometh to passe either without thy counsell *b*, without thy providence, or without cause
b Mat. 6
26. 17.
Math. 10 why.

28. 29. 30. And assuredly it is good for me, O
1 cor. 12. 6 Lord, that I haue been afflicted, that
c Psal. 119. I may learn thy statutes *c*, and cast off
71. 76 all pride & arrogancy of minde.

d Pla. 41. It is good for me that I am put to
23. 24 shame, that I may seek comfort from
and *69. 29* thee rather then of men *d*. Thereby
e Ro. 11. 33 also doe I learne to stand in feare of
f Pla. 73 thine vnsearchable iudgements, who
2. 3. &c. punishest the Righteous as well as
1 Pet. 4. 17 the Wicked, and yet none of them

wi-

of the Imitation of Christ.

without equitie and iustice g.

g Psa. 99. 4

I thank thee, O Lord, for not sparing to afflict me with euils, with bitter paines, griefe and anguish both within and without. None is there of all vnder heauen that can comfort me in this misery, none I say is there but thou alone my God, and my Lord who art the celestiall cure of soules b, who both woundest & makest whole againe i, bringest downe to the graue and raisest vp k.

& 119. 75

b Psa. 147. 3

Mar. 9. 11

22. 29. 33

i Deut. 32

Thy correction is vpon me, thy rod teacheth me wisdom l. Lo, most loving Father, I submit my selfe to the rod of thy discipline m. Strike both my back & my neck too, that I may turne mine vntowardlinesse after thy will. Make me, O Lord, thine humble and godly disciple, as thou hast right well accustomed to doe, that I may euen wholly obey every commandment of thine n. To thee and to thy correction I commend both my selfe and all mine, for better it is to be punished here, then hereafter o.

19

l. 1. Sa. 26

Tob. 13. 2

i Pr. 29. 15

m Mat. 26

34. 41

n Psa. 119. 71

o Esa. 54. 6

Thou knowest all, and every thing, yea the most secret cogitation in the heart of man, thou knowest p. Thou knowest what shal be afore it come to passe q, neither hast thou neede to

Gal. 6. 9. 10

p Heb. 4. 1

q Ro. 11. 2

Na.

be.

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be informed or admonished of those things which are done in the world. Thou knowest wherein I may profit best, & what good aduersity will doe to the scouring off, as it were, the rust of wickednesse *r*. And therefore vse me euen as thou wilt *s*, and reiect mee *t* not for my wicked life *t*, which none knoweth so well as thou, yea, to say the truth, none knoweth it but thou alone *u*.

r Wis. 3. 6 O Lord, grant me to knowe those things that I should know *x*, to loue *y* Deu. 6. 5 that is to bee loued *y*, to praise that which pleaseth thee, to make account of such as thou hast in price, and finally to mislike that which thou dost loath.

Suffer me not either to iudge after *z* Deu. 1. 17 the sight of the outward eyes *z* or to *z* Sa. 16. 7 give sentenec according to the hearing of mine vnskilfull eares, but *z* Sirac. 42. 1 with right iudgement to discern betweene things both visible and spiritual *z*, and afore all things euermore *a* 1 Cor. 2 to seeke after the pleasure of thine *a* 10. 11. &c. heavenly will. For commonly the *b* 1 Cor. 2 senses of men in iudging *b* are deceived, and the friends of this world by *b* 7. 8 *c* Iam. 2. 2. 3 louing onely visible things *c*, are deceived also. *c* Ioh. 2. 15 *c* 16. 17

Is a man so much the better as hee
 is greater in the opinion of man? *d Lu. 16*
 The decentfull in praising the deceit- *19.20*
 full: the vaine man in extolling the
 vaine, the blind in commending the
 blind: the weake in magnifying the
 weake, deceueth him: & by praising *e Ioh. 5.44*
 vainely, hee doth verely shame him *e. Ioh. 22.43*
 For in truth such is a man, and no *f Francis*
 more, as thou esteemest him to bee, *the Mi-*
 as one flaid right well. *norite.*

CHAP. LVII.

*That we are to exercise our selues with
 baser workes, when we cannot
 doe the best.*

LORD.

MY Sonne, thou canst not al-
 waies abide in the most earnest
 and ardent study of vertue, nor con-
 tinue in the highest degree of heavenly
 contemplation: but of force through
 originall corruption *a*, thou art made *a Gen. 3*
 sometime to come downe vnto inte- *16.17.&c.*
 rior things, and to beare the burthen *Rom. 7.14*
 of this mortall life *b* though vnwil- *15.&c.*
 lingly and with griefe. For as long *b Wisd. 9*
 as thou carrest about a mortall body, *5.13*

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thou shalt feele the weight and beaui-
 c Wil. 9. 15 nesse of the same c.

Therefore in the flesh thou must
 often groane vnder the burthen of
 d Ro. 7. 24 flesh d, because thou canst not alwaies
 without intermission continue in the
 study of spirituall things, and heauenly
 contemplations.

Here then it is behouefull to make
 recourse vnto base & outward works,
 e Mat. 24 to refresh thy selfe in good deeds, and
 46. 47 with a strong faith to waite e, till I
 Hgb. 11 come from an high to visit thee, and
 13. 14. 15 to suffer with patience thine exile f,
 Gen 47. 9 and hunger of minde, vntill I see thee
 Psa. 19. 54 againe g, and deliuer thee from all
 1 cor. 15 troubles h.

For I will make thee to forget thy
 51. & c. paines, and to enjoy fully the inner
 h Reu. 21 quietnesse i. Yea I will open vnto thee
 i loh. 16 the field of the holy Scriptures, that
 22. with a ioyfull minde thou mayest be-
 kps. 119. 32 gin to trauerse the way of my com-
 1 Ro. 8. 18 mandements k, and breake into these
 words l, The afflictions of this pre-
 sent time, are not worthy the glorie
 which shall be shewed vpon vs.

CHAP. LVIII.

*That man should thinke himselfe to de-
serue no comfort at Gods hand,
but condemnation.*

SERVANT.

O Lord, I am not worthy thy com-
fort, or any spirituall consolati-
on *a*. And therefore thou dost right *a* 1 Cor. 15
well *b*, when thou forsakest me poore *b* 9. 16
wretch, and leavest me without com- *b* Psal. 145.
fort. *79.*

For though I should poure out e-
uen a sea of teares, yet could I not de-
serue any comfort at thine hand. That
which I deserue bee stripes, and pu-
nishment; because I haue so often so
griuously offended thee, and in so
many things so greatly sinned *c*. So *c* Luk. 15
that were the matter duly considered *c* 18. 21.
d, I am not worthy the least of all thy *d* Psal. 69
comforts. *5. 13. 16*

And yet, O gracious and mercifull
God, who wilt not that thy workes
should perish *e*, to declare thy riches *e* Ezr. 33.
of thy goodnesse vpon the vessels of *f* Eph. 7. 8
thy mercy, thou dost vouchsafe to *f* and 2. 45.
comfort me having no merite, farre

g Pl. 71. 15 beyond the maner of men g. Neither
Lu. 15. 22. bee thine heauenly comforts like
23. 24 worldly communications h.

h 2 co. 1. 12 But what haue I done, Lord, that
& 2 Cor. 7 thou wouldest impart vnto mee any
4. 5. 6 spirituall comfort at all i? Truly that

i Ro. 11. 5 I remember, I haue done no good at
6. &c. all, but alwayes haue bene both prone

k Gen. 6. 5 vnto sinne k, and slowe to repent.
and 8. 21 And this is so true, as if I should de-

Ro. 3. 9. 20 nie it, both thou wilt finde me a lyar,
and no man dare stand to excuse

l Iob. 9. 2 mee l.

&c. 32. By my sinnes what haue I merited
m Mat. 25 but hell and euerlasting fire m?

45. And therefore I playnely, and in-

deed confesse, I am worthy all re-

proch and contempt, and most vn-

woorthy to liue among thy sonnes &

seruants n.

o Pl. 32. 5. And albeit I can hardly be brought
to do it; yet because it is true, I will

confesse against my selfe my wicked-

nesse o, that so the looser I may ob-

taine mercy at thine hand.

But what shall I, sinner that I am,
full of all manner of shame and infamie,
what shall I say? Surely I haue

p Pl. 52. 11 nothing to say, but even this: I haue
& 40. 11. 12 sinned, Lord: I haue sinned, take mer-

& 51. 1. 2. 3 cie on me p, forgive me: suffer me yet
a

awhile to bewaile my wretchedness,
before I passe ouer into the land of
darknesse, couered with the shadow
of death q.

q Iob. 10

For what else doost thou of a guiltie & miserable man require, but that
hee afflict and humble himselfe for
his sinne r?

r 1. 22.

r Ezech. 18.

For of true repentance & humbling
of the mind, ariseth hope of pardon
f; the troubled conscience is reconciled
vnto God s, the fauour of God and
which was lost is recovered s, man
is preserved from the vengeance to
come s, and with an holy kisse, both
GOD and the sorrowfull soule doe
meet together y.

y Lu. 15. 20

I say, the vnfeined repentance for
sins committed is the accepted sacrifice
vnto thee, O Lord, lauouring
more sweetly in thy Nostrils, than
doth the perfume of frankincense z.

z Pl. 51. 16

This is the sweet oyntment which
thou, who neuer despisest the troubled
and humbled minde of man s, wouldest
shouldest bee poured vpon
thine holy feet b: this is the place of
refuge against the rage of the enemy c.
here it is amended and washed away
whatsoever else where was polluted,
and defiled d.

s ps. 147. 19

b Lu. 7. 36

3. 28.

c ps. 138. 6.

7.

d ps. 51. 2.

I Cor. 6. 12

CHAP. LIX.

*Men outwardly minded, find no fauour
before God.*

LORD.

Sonne, my fauour is more preci-
ous, than that it will meddle with

outward things, & earthly pleasures a.
Wherefore thou must cast off what.

soeuer is a let thereunto b, if thou
wouldst bee replenished with the
same.

Leave company c, loue to dwell by
thy selfe alone; auoyde communica-
tion; but poure out godly praers be-

fore the Lord d, that thy minde may
bee stirred vp vnto godlinesse & kept
from sinne.

Despise euen the whole world, and
prefer the calling of God before all

outward things e. For doubtlesse thou
canst not both serue mee, and delight
in transitory things too f.

Thou must leave thine acquain-
tance, and deare friends g, and call
away thy mind from all worldly plea-

sure h. So doth Peter admonish the
disciples of Christ, that they be-
haue

Chap. 59. 251. *Renounce all, to finde God
of the Imitation of Christ.*

haue themselves in this world as pil- i 1 pe. 2. 11
grimes and strangers. i. Gal. 6. 14

O with what a faith and confidence Rom. 8. 35
shall hee die, who is not kept backe 36
with the desire of any earthly thing? Phil. 3. 20

But no sicke man can haue such a 1 Rom. 8. 5
minde, neither doth the carnall man 1 Cor. 2
perceiue the liberty of him who is 14. 15. 16
spirituall 7.

But if he will become spirituall, hee
must renounce both strangers, and m Ma. 10. 37
nigh friends also m, and take heed of n Ro. 7. 3
none more than of himselfe n. 1 cor. 5. 14

If thou hast perfectly subdued thy
selfe o, thou shalt with more ease van- o Mat. 8. 35
quish other things. For that is true
victory, to triumph over a mans
selfe.

For hee who hath his minde so in
subiection, that both his desire obey-
eth reason, and his reason fulfilleth
my commandments in all things, is
doubtlesse both a conquerer of him-
selfe p, and also a Lord of the world q:
to which toppe of perfection, if thou 38. 39
wouldest clime, thou must manfully 9 Ro. 8. 37
begin, and lay the axe to the stump r, r Mat. 3. 10
so to cut offe euery by the roote all hid-
den and immoderate loue, both of
thy selfe. and also of euery priuate and
carnall good thing.

For

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For of this immoderate selfe loue,
 f Mat. 7. 3. 4 only dependeth almost all that a man
 & Ma. 11. 29 must utterly root vp f: which vice be-
 u Ro. 6. 3 ing once subdued, great peace and
 Col. 3. 5 perpetual quietnesse will ensue &.

But for that few do endeavor per-
 & Eph. 4 fectly to mortifie u, and altogether to
 2. 2. 23. 24 forsake themselves &, it cometh to
 y Jam. 4. 1 passe that many doe remaine snarled
 2. 3 within y, and cannot in spirit rise a-
 2 Gal. 5. 19 boue themselves.

But hee that freely would liue with
 20. 21 me, must mortifie and slay all wicked
 & 1 Iob. 3 and intemperate affections of his
 35. 16 minde z, and stick to nothing created
 Phi. 3. 7. 8 ouer-greedily.
 2 Cor. 7
 19. 30. 31

CHAP. LX.

*The diuerse working of Nature and
 of Grace.*

LORD.

MY Sonne, consider diligently
 the diuerse motions betweene
 Nature and Grace. For after so sub-
 tle, and contrarie a manner their mo-
 tions be, that hardly they can be dis-
 cerned, but of the spirituall and illu-
 minated man &.

& 1 Cor. 2. 4

All

of the Imitation of Christ.

All men couet indeede that which is good, yea and pretend a colour of *b* Ro. 1. 10 goodnes in their deeds and sayings: 21. & 10 therefore vnder the shew of that which 3. 4 good is, many are deceiued. 1 co. 13. 2

Nature is crafty, and carrieth away, 1. & 1 cor. entrappeth & deceiueth many a man, 15. 30. 31 yea and it would alwaies bee the end 32 of action *b*: but Grace dealeth simply, and declineth from all kind of 65. 70 euill, vseth no deceit, doth all things Luk. 22. 55 plainly for Gods sake, and resteth in 56. 57 him vnto the end *c*. Ioh. 21. 18

Nature refuseth to die *b*, to be kept Rom. 7. 15 downe, to be overcome, to be in sub- 16. & c. ijection, and to be kept vnder: Grace 6 Gal. 6. 14 studieth to be mortified *c*, striveth a- f Rom. 7 gainst appetite *f*, coueteth to bee 22. 23 brought in subiection, & to be over- g Eph. 5. 6 come *g*, will not vse her liberty, lo- 1 Pet. 2 ueth to be kept in awe, will not Lord 11. 12 ouer any *h*, but is ready euermore to *h* 1 Cor. 6. 6 liue, to abide, to be vnder God, yea, 12. 13 and for Gods cause humbly to obey 11 Cor. 13 euery man *i*. 3. & c.

Nature seeketh after profit *k*, and *k* Mat. 9. 31 considereth what lucre may bee gotten by another: but grace doth note 11 cor. 9 rather what may benefit others *L*, than 12. 15. & profit her selfe. 1 co. 10. 33

Nature is glad when shee is had in Col. 3. 1. 2
honour

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m Io. 5. 44 honor, & cōmended among men *m* :
 and *12. 43* but grace ascribeth all glory & praise
Act. 1. 2 vnto God *n*.
11. 22. & c. Nature feareth reproach and con-
n *1 co. 10. 1* tempt^e, but grace is glad to be rebu-
Col. 3. 17 ked for the name of Christ *p*.
Act. 14. 13 Nature loueth ease and quietnesse
14. 15 of body *d* : Grace cannot be idle, but
Lu. 18. 18 willingly setteth her selfe to labour *r*.
p *A. 5. 41* Nature seeketh after curious and
Mat. 5. 10 goodly, and abhorreth from base and
Mat. 25 grosse things *f*. Grace is delighted
8. 18 with simple and base things, despiseth
1 Cor. 15 not rough, neither refuseth to put on
30. 32 old raggs.
1 Cor. 11 Nature respecteth transitory things
23. 24 *n*, reioyceth at worldly gaine, fret-
f *Lu. 16. 19* teth at losse, and at euery despite.
Phi. 4. 11 full word is out of quiet : but grace
12 hath respect vnto heavenly things,
1 co. 11. 27 cleaueth not to the world *n*, at losse
1 Ti. 6 7. 8 is not troubled *y*, nor disquieted at
n *Lu. 12. 16* shapewords, because her treasure is
17. & c. reposed in heauen *x*, where nothing
n *Lu. 12* perissheth *a*.
22. 23 Nature is couetous, and more glad-
7 *1 co. 13. 7* ly taketh than giueth *b*, louing pri-
2 *Mat. 5. 11* uate gaine : but grace is bountifull *e*,
n *Mat. 6. 20* and liberall, shunneth private com-
b *1 co. 6. 9* moditie, is content with little *d* ; iud-
e *1 co. 13. 4* ging it better to giue than to receiue.
d *Ac. 10. 33* Nature

Chap. 60 255 Nature and grace described
of the Imitation of Christ.

Nature is bent vnto the world e, e Gen. 6. 5.
vnto the flesh, vnto vanity & to vagaries : but grace allureth vnto God,
and vnto well doing, biddeth all creatures Farewell, flyeth the World, abhorreth the desires of the flesh f, ab. f Ioh. 1. 15
staineth from idle gadding, & blusheth to be seene abroad. 16.
1-Co. 7. 31

Nature seeketh outward solace, by Gal. 5. 19
whose allurements it may bee delighted g : but grace seeketh comfort at g Luk. 15.
God alone, and delighteth her selfe 13.
in the chiefe good h, aboue all visible h 1 cor. 13
things.

Nature doth all for gaine, nothing frankly, and still looketh either for as good a rewarde or greater, and hopeth either for praise or for fauour in respect of benefits bestowed : finally, it coueteth to haue her deedes, and gifts to bee greatly accounted of : but grace hunteth after no worldlie thing, neither looketh for any recompence besides God alone, nor yet coueteth more temporall things than are necessary for the attainment of k 1 Tim. 6
everlasting life k. 7.8.

Nature glorieth in the multitude of friends and kinsfolke, and boasteth in the nobility of stock, & ancestors : fauoureth the mighty, flattereth the weak.

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wealthy, and loueth her equals : but
1 Mat. 5 Grace loueth neuer her enemies 1,
44-45 braggeth not of many friends, nei-
ther yet respecteth the place or stock

m Io. 8. 33 whence shee was borne m, vnlesse the
greater vertue & godlines florished
there. This grace fauoureth the poore
more thē the rich, lamenteth the case
of the innocent more than of the
mighty, delighteth in the true, not in
the deceitfull, and alwayes exhorteth

good men to follow chiefly the most
excellent gifts n, and to expresse the
Sonne of G O D in their man-
ners o.

Nature quickly complaineth of
want and pouerty p. Grace constant-
ly endureth need q.

Nature referreth all to herselfe, &
Col. 3. 17. striueth and contendeth for her selfe:
1 Iam. 1. 18 but grace referreth all things vnto the
1 Ioh. 3. 9. glory of God r, whence shee sprang s,
Ioh. 1. 12 ascribeth no goodnes to herselfe, is
13. not arrogant, nor contentious, nei-
1 Cor. 13 ther yet perferreth her owne opinion
4-5. 6 before others, but in all study and
searching of the truth submitteth her
selfe to the wisedome, and iudgement
of God.

Nature coueteth greedilie to
knowe, and heare newes, and se-
crets,

Chap. 60. 257 Nature and grace described
of the Imitation of Christ.

crets, loueth outwardly to appeare; & to try much by the senses: & finally desireth to be knowne, & to doe such things as may bring her fame and glory in the world. *1 Ioh. 5. 44 and 13. 43*

But grace seeketh not after newes and curious knowledge; both because it proceeds altogether from the old corruption of many, and also for that indeede there is no newe or durable thing vpon earth. And therefore it teacheth men to abstaine from foolish pleasure, to shunne vaine glory, modestly to conceale such things as seeme praise-worthy, and to be had in admiration for their excellence; and of euery thing, and knowledge to get profit, and to seeke the glory of God. Finally, shee desireth to haue neither herselfe, nor hers to be praised; but God, who of mere good will imparteth all things vnto vs, to be thanked for his benefits. *Mar. 6. 1. 5 16. Eccl. 3. 12. 23. 24. Rom. 7. 3. Gen. 6. 5. 1 Ioh. 2. 15 16. 17. Jer. 9. 23. Gal. 5. 25 1 Cor. 13. 4 Col. 3. 17 1 Cor. 4. 6. 7. 1 Iam. 1. 17. 1 Thel. 5. 18.*

his grace is a light set aboue nature, & a certain singular gift of God, a note proper to the elect, and pledge of euerlasting life; which lifteth a man from earthly to the loue of heauenly things, & of a carnall makes a spirituall man.

And

The third booke

And therefore the more nature is
 2 Cor. 4 pressed downe, and tyed vp, the more
 16. 17. 18 grace is inspired *k*, and the inner man
 1 Eph. 4. 12 with newe gifts after the image of
 23. 24 God is renewed euery day *l*.
 col. 3. 9. 10

CHAP. LXI.

*Of the corruption of Nature, and power
 of Gods heavenly grace.*

SERVANT.

Q Lord, my God, who hast crea-
 ted mee after thine owne Image
 Gen. 1 *a*, giue me such grace (which is most
 26. 27. 1 excellent and necessary vnto saluati-
 and 5. 1 on as thou hast shewne *b*) that I may
 Wisd. 2. 23 subdue my wicked nature, drawing
 Eccl. 7. 1. 2 mee alwaies vnto sione and destruc-
 1 cor. 11. 7. tion.

Col. 3. 10. For I see in my flesh the law of
 Ro. 9. 23 sin, rebelling against the lawe of my
 Gen. 6. 5 minde *d*, and leading mee captiue to
 Ro. 7. 13 the satisfying of my desire in many
 things, so that without the assistance
 of thy most heavenly grace, poured
 zealously into my mind, I am vnable
 to resist the assaults thereof.

Yea Lord, I lacke thy grace, and
 that much grace of thine, whereby
 my

of the Imitation of Christ.

my nature prone vnto all impietie, e-
uen from my youth, may be subdu- *Gen. 8.18*
ed and overcome. For nature beeing *Mat. 15.19*
fallen through the offence of the first
man, and defiled through sinne, the
punishment thereof hath redounded
vnto all mankind. So that nature
which at the first thou diddest make
good and righteous, is now counted
for the sin & infirmity of the corrupt
nature, in as much as the motion left
vnto it, tendeth alwaies vnto euill, &
inferiour things *f*. For, as touching *f* *Wis. 9.25*
that little power which abideth in the *Rom. 7.14*
same *g*, that is like a certaine sparkle *15.18*
raked vp in the ashes, *g* *Ioh. 1.9*

This is that naturall reason, enclo- *1 pet. 1.19*
fed about with blacke darknes, yet so
that somewhat still it can discern, and
iudge betweene good and euill, be-
twene truth & falshood *h*, although *h* *Rom. 7*
it haue no power to fulfill that which *14.15.16*
is alloweth *i*, neither enioyeth a per- *i* *Phi. 1.13*
fect light of the truth *k*, with sound- *2 cor. 3.5*
nesse of her affections. *k* *Mat. 6*

Hence, O my God, it is, that as *12.14*
touching the inward man, I am de- *Ro. 7.22*
lighted with thy lawe *l*, knowing that *m* *1 Tim.*
thy statutes are good, righteous, ho- *1:8*
ly *m*, and that they reprove euill and *Rom. 17.1*
wickednesse, and teach what is to bee *13.18*

The third booke

Rom. 7. 23 auoydest. But in my flesh I serue the
 28 law of Sinne, whilst I obey the appe-
 29 tite more than reason.

Hence it is, that to will is present
 with me, but alas I find no meanes to
 n Psal. 104 perform. Hereof it is that oftentimes
 29 I purpose to do many things wel: but
 o Ro. 7. 15 because thy heavenly fauour is wan-
 p Wis. 9. 15 ting n, which may helpe mine infir-
 q Phi. 2. 13 mitie, by a little resistance I slide
 r Io. 15. 4. 5 back and tire. Yea, hereof it is, that
 f Phi. 4. 13 I know indeed the way of righteous-
 e Ro. 5. 20 nesse, and see as in a glasse what my
 28. dutie is o, but through the weight of
 n Ro. 3. 20 my sinne p. I haue no power to arise
 Gal. 2. 16 vnto perfection.

Rom. 11. 6 O Lord, how greatly do I lack thy
 n Rom. 11 grace both to begin what good is, &
 17. 18 also to proceed thoroughly in good-
 y 1 Cor. 1 nels q! For without it can I doe no-
 19. 20 thing; through the helpe thereof I
 2 Luk. 22 can doe all things in thee f.

16. 17. &c. O heavenly grace indeed s, without
 & 16. 12. 23 which, neither the merits of man n,
 o 2 Sa. 14 nor the gifts of nature are of price n.
 25. & 2 Sa. O Lord, without thy grace, neither
 18. 9. 10 learning y, neither riches z, neither
 b 1 Sa. 17 beauty a, nor strength h, nor wit, nei-
 4. 5. &c. ther eloquence e, is of any waight be-
 e Act. 12 fore thee.

21. 22. 23 For the gifts of nature are common

to the wicked as well as to the good d, d Ier. 9.23
 but grace is a gift peculiar only to the Psal. 73.13
 elect e, which whoso haue, are coun- e Ro. 11.36
 ted meet and worthy eternall life. Fi-
 nally, it is so excellent, that without it
 neither the gift of prophecie, nor the
 working of miracles f, neither the f-Mat. 7.22
 profound knowledge of secret things
 is any thing worth: yea neither faith,
 nor hope, nor any other vertues are
 accepted in thy sight without loue &
 grace g.

O blessed grace, which makest him g 1 cor. 13
 1.&c.
 rich with vertues, who is poore in spi-
 rit h, and him humble of minde, who b Mat. 5.32
 is rich for goods i: Come, com down i Ro. 11.10
 to mee, fill me earely with thy com-
 fort, that my mind for weariness and
 hunger doe not faint.

O Lord, I beseech thee, impart thy k Luk. 1
 30.48
 grace vnto me k that is sufficient for L 1 co. 12.9
 me l, though I haue nought else that m Psal. 2.34
 nature would require. Yea, I protest Rom. 8.31
 if that be with me, I wil dread no ten- n Psal. 13.2
 tation nor trouble what soeuer m what o Psal. 10.1
 is my strength n: that bringeth coun- p Ro. 8.31
 sell and helpe o: yea it is both migh- q 1 cor. 1
 tier than all enemies p, and wiser than 19.20
 the prudent q.

It is the mistress of truth, the teacher 4,25.26
 of discipline, the light of the mind r, Luk. 10.21
 the

The third booke

the comfort in affliction, the expeller
of sadness, the remoouer away of
Psa. 83. 4 care, the nourisher of religion, the
7. 19 mother of teares: at a word, without
it what am I but withered wood, and
a roote most voprofitable, and to be
Iob. 15. 4 cast away?

5. 9

Wherefore, O Lorde, let this day
Grace both go afore, and also follow
me, whereby I may continually apply
my selfe vnto well doing, through
Iesus Christ thy sonne. Amen.

CHAP. LXII.

That we ought to deny our selues, and to
imitate Christ, by the crosse.

LORD.

LU. 9. 23 **T**He more thou leauest thy selfe a,
1 Cor. 4. 16 my sonne, the nigher thou com-
mest vnto me b.

As outwardly to couet nothing,
causeth inward peace, so inwardly to
forsake ones selfe, ioyneth man to
e Lu. 9. 4 God c.

My mind is, that thou learn a per-
and 19. 27 fection deniall of thy selfe in my will, &
Ioh. 2. 19 that without all contradiction or
muttering d. Follow thou mee e, I
Ioh. 18. 6 am the way, the truth and the life f.

With.

of the Imitation of Christ.

without a way men walke not; without a truth men knowe not; without a life they liue not. I am the way wher-
in thou must walke, the truth whereunto thou must stick, the life for which thou must hope. I am the way inu-
riable, the truth infallible, the life euer-
lasting. I am the right way, the chie-
fest truth, the true life, the blessed life,
the life vncreate.

If thou goe forward in my waie,
thou shalt knowe the truth, and the
truth shall so make thee free, that
thou shalt attaine vnto euerlasting
life.

If thou wouldest enter into life,
keepe the commandements. If thou
wouldest knowe the truth, belieue
mee. If thou wouldest be perfect, sell
all. Wouldest thou bee my disciple?
then deny thy selfe. Wouldest thou
attaine vnto a blessed life? then de-
spise the life present. Wouldest thou
be extolled in heauen? then debase
thy selfe on earth. Wouldest thou
raigne with mee then suffer with mee.
For onely the seruants of the crosse
doe find the way of happinesse, & of
a true life.

S E R V. O Lord Iesu Christ,
for as much as thy way is narrow &

odious

The third booke

* Ioh. 15. odious to the world r, giue me grace
18. 19. 20. with thee to despise the world s. For
s I Ioh. 1. neither is the seruant greater then the
15. 16. 17. Lord, nor the Disciple aboue the ma-
* Ma. 10. 24 ster t.

Luk. 6. 40 Let thy seruant be exercised in thy
Ioh. 13. 16 way, because therein my saluation, &
and 16. 20 true holinesse doth consist. What lo-
Psa. 119. 6 cuer I read, or hear without the same,
* Psa. 125 can neuer fully recreate or delight
12. 14. me x.

* Psa. 119 L O R D. Sonne, seeing thou hast
14. 103. read and knowest all these things,
111. 127 blessed shalt thou bee, if thou fulfill
* Mat. 7 them. He that vnderstandeth and ful-
24. 25 filleth all my commandements, lo-
Iam. 1. 25 ueth mee, and I will loue him again x,
x Io. 14. 23 and reueale my selfe vnto him, and
bring it so to passe, that hee shall sit
with me in the kingdome of my Fa-
* Math. 22 ther a.

34. S E R V. Grant therefore Lord,
that what thou hast said and promi-
* Psa. 89 sed, may come to me b.

28. 33 From thine hands I haue receiued
the crosse: I will beare the same euē
to the death, as thou hast emoynd
* Lu. 21. 19 me c.

Doubtlesse the life of a true Chri-
stian, is the crosse, but that is the way
da Ct. 14. 22 into heauen d: neither backward, nor
from

from our course we may not goe e. e Lu. 9. 6. 2

Fight bretheren, let vs proceed to- f Mat. 28.

gether: Iesus will be with vs f, for Ie. 30.

Iesus sake we haue taken this crosse vp. Ioh. 18. 22

on vs, let vs preleuere in the crosse g Mat. 11

for Iesus sake g. He will help vs, who Iohn 15

is our captain and goeth afore vs h. 19. 10

Loe, our king goeth in before vs, 1 Pet. 2

fighting on our behalfe i. Let vs fol- 21. 22. 23.

low manfully k let no man bee dif- b Phil. 2. 5.

mayed? let vs euen valiantly appoint 6. 7. 8

to dye in battell, neuer let vs staine i Heb. 12

our honour by flying frō the crosse m. 1. 2. 3. 4

Reu. 17. 14.

CHAP. LXIII.

k Plā. 27. 1

That wee should take heede of despaire, l 1 Ti. 1. 18

though we fall sometime.

1 Ti. 6. 12

3 Ti. 2. 3

LORD.

m Lu. 6. 22

Esa. 30. 15

Sonne, patience and repentance in Lu. 25. 19

Saduerfity n, doth more please mee a lam. 5. 9

then much ioy, and deuotion in prof.

perity.

Why art thou vexed with so small a

thing spoken against thee? the which

were it greater should not moue

thee b.

b Mat. 5. 12

Care not for this, it is no new thing c Heb. 12. 3

nor the first e, and shall not be the last 1 Pet. 3. 21

if thou liue longer.

22.

Q

Thou

The third booke

Thou art man good enough, while
d Mat. 26 prosperity doth last d, yea thou canst
33.35. give counsell also to others, and en-
lu. 12. 33. courage them with words: but when
suddaun aduersity is at hand, thou art
straighway without both counsell &
courage.

Mat. 26

62.70

Luke. 22

56.57

Ps. 119

67.24

Prov. 3

31.12

Heb. 12.7

8.9

Rom. 12

12.12

Weigh what thy frailty is, of which
thou hast prooff oftentimes in little
chances. Notwithstanding, these and
such like, are good for thee f.

Cast these things out of thy mind
as thou knowest thou shouldest doe:
and if they touch thee, endeavour that
they neuer overthrow thee, nor over-
trouble thee: at the least wise beare
thrust patiently g, if thou canst not
joyfully.

Now if thou heare such things a-
gainst thy will, and conceivest indig-
nation thereat, bridle thy selfe and
take heede that nothing slippe out of
thy mouth, whereby the little ones
may be offended h. So will both this
perturbation of thine quickly bee set-
tled, and thy griefe of mind, through
the returne of Gods grace, be turned
into joy.

Mat. 18

6.7

Mar. 9.42

Lu. 17.1.1

I yet live, saith the Lord, ready to
helpe and extraordinarily to com-
fort thee, if thou call vpon me; religi-
ously

Chap. 63 267 *Use patience, and please God
of the Imitation of Christ.*

ously in faith *h.* *Mat. 21. 2*

Be thou patient, and prepare thy selfe to greater troubles. Thou must not therefore be out of hart, though thou see thy selfe greatly to be afflicted, and tempted grievously. Thou art a man, no God; neither Angell, but flesh.

Thinkest thou alwaies to abide in one and the same state of godliness? when neither the Angels in heaven nor Adame the first man in Paradise could, for both fell quickly?

I am he, who will both strengthen the mourners with health, and exalt into my dignity such as acknowledge their owne weakenesse.

SERV. O Lord, for thy wordes more sweet to mee than hony, & the hony combe, I thanke thee.

Alas, in such calamity and troubles what should I doe, diddest not thou strengthen mee with this ghosly speech?

So that as I say I may come vnto the Port of Salvation, what skillesh thou what and how great things I endure?

O Lord grant mee a good end, and a blessed departure out of this life. O my God, remember me, and guide mee

O 2. mee

The third booke

me the right way into thy kingdome,
Amen.

CHAP. LXIII.

*That high matters and secret iudgements of God should not bee
searched after.*

(::)

OF hard matters, my Sonne, and
of the secret iudgements of
God, Take heed thou dispute not
pro. 25. 2 I say, reason not either why this man
Eccl. 3. 22 is so reiected, or that man in such fa-
23. 24 vour 6, why this man is so miserably
Rom. 11 afflicted, that man so highly aduan-
18. 19 ced.

These things are beyond the reach
of man, neither is any reason or dis-
putation meet enough to search out
the counsell of the Almighty.

6 Esa. 40
28

Therefore, when either the enemy
doth bring these things into thy
mind, or else some curious fellowes in-
quire of thee, answer with the prophet
d, Righteous art thou, O Lord, and
137 iust are thy iudgements. Again say
e Psa. 119. 5 The iudgements of the Lord are
true, they are righteous altogether.

For my iudgements are to be fea-
red

red, not to be discussed, in as much as they are above the capacity of man *f. Ro. 11. 33*

Doe thou neither enquire, nor dispute touching the merits of Saints, who either was more holy in the world, or is more glorious in heauen. For these things oftentimes breede strife and vaine contentions *3*, yea & *g* *1 Ti. 6. 4* moreover they nourish pride & ambition, whereof spring enuy and discord *h* *1 Tim. 6. 4-5*, while one doth proudly contend one to be more holy and religious than another.

The desire to learn & to finde out these things gets no profit at all: but displeasure of the saints. For I am not the God of dissension, but the God *i* *1 Cor. 14. 33* of peace *i*, which peace consisteth in true modesty *k*, not in arrogancy of minde *l*. *1 Efa 37. 21*

Some through good will are more inclined towards these than towards *m* *1 Cor. 3. 3* those, but that do they rather of humane affection, then of heauenly *n*. *Gen. 3. 9*

I am he who made all the Saints *n*, *o* *1 sm. 1. 17* who haue endowed them with gifts *p*, *pl oh. 17. 22* and exalted them to glory *p*. I know *q* *Pla. 137* what every one hath deserued. I pre-*u* *Mat. 23. 34* uented them with most liberall blessing *r* *Ro. 8. 28* sings *r*, I before the world began, *29. 33* foreknew who were to be loued *s*, *1 Tim. 1. 9*

f Ioh. 15 chose them out of the worlde f, not
16 they me: I of my great fauour called
e Ro. 8. 20 them e, and drew them e mercifully
e Ier. 3. 31 vnto me, I ledde them through ma-
Ioh. 6. 44 nifold tentations e, and powred most
e Heb. 11 singular comforts vpon them y: I
32. 33. 34 gaue them power to perseuere z, and
y pl. 94. 19 crowned their patience e, I knowe
2 Cor. 1. 7 both the first and last b, I loue all
1 Cor. 4. 4 men most wonderfully e, I am to be
5. &c. praised in all my Saints d, and in each
7 Phi. 1. 12 of them honoured and glorified, who
13. 14 haue so gloriously exalted such as I
and 2. 31 did predestinate, and that without
e 2 Tim. 2 any merites at all which they had
12 done f. Ioh. 1. 12
Reu. 2. 26 Therefore whoso despiseth euen
b Ma. 19. 30 the least of my seruants, doth not ho-
e Ma. 5. 45 nour the great g. Because I haue made
1 Tim. 2. 4 the small as well as the great: so that
e Psa. 148 hee who derogates from any of the
1. 2. &c. Saints, derogates from me, and from
e Ro. 8. 30 all the partakers of the celestiall king-
Bph. 1. 4. 5 dome.
f 2 Ti. 1. 9 For all are one through the band
g Ma. 10 of loue, they all think one thing, they
40. & 18. 10 minde one thing, and they loue all as
e 13. 45 one h.
Lu. 10. 16 Yea, which is farre more strange,
b Ro. 12. 4 they loue me more than themselues g
Ex. 2. 32 or any merites of their owne. For
being

being rauished aboue themselves, & carried away from all selfe-love, they proceed wholly into the loue of mee, so that nothing can either turne them away, or keep them down k. For being full of eternall truth, they burne with the fire of loue vnquenchable. k Rom. 5. 3. 4. 5. Rom. 8. 35

Let therefore carnall and fleshly men, who know nothing but how to loue their priuate joyes, surcease fro prating about the state of the godly m. For they adde vnto, and diminish from their praises according as in affection they are inclined, not as pleaseth the eternall truth. l i co. 13. 5. m i co. 3. 14

Many are ignorant, but they especially, who beeing smally enlightened, can seldome loue any man n with a perfect spirituall affection of n i Iohn 2. 9. 10. &c. loue n. o Wis 9

Some through naturall & humane affection are inclined toward these men, and toward those, and as they thinke of earthly, so they iudge of heavenly things o. p Ti. 3. 16

But vspeakeable is the difference betweene those things which vnperfect men doe dream of, and betweene that which men spiritually enlightened from aboue p, doe behold q. q 2 Pet. 2. 13. 14. 15. 16

Therefore my sonne, make not cu-

O 4. 14. 15. 16 riously

The third booke

riously in those matters, which passe the reach of thy wit: but bend thy whole studie, that thou maiest bee found the least in the kingdome of God.

* Ezech. 3

22. 23. 24

f Mat. 5. 3

Now in case a man knew who were eyther more holie for zeale, or in place more honorable then the least in the kingdome of heauen, what good would that knoweledge bring him, but onely to make him the more humble in my sight thereby, and to breake the oftner into the praise of my name?

* Eccl. 2. 13

Hee pleaseth God better that thinketh how great his finnes, and how little his vertues are, and how far he is from the perfection of godly men, then hee doth which disputeth about the highnesse & basenes of the Saints of God.

* Mat. 18

1. 2.

They glory not of their owne merits, in as much as they ascribe no goodnes to themselves, but confess that whatsoeuer they haue, commeth from me, who haue giuen them all things, of mine infinite mercy and loue.

* 1 Cor. 4.

6. 7.

y La. 1. 17

2 ps. 6. 11

Iohn 16

22. 33

And they for their parts are filled with such fulnes of the Godhead, and ioy, that they lacke no glory nor felicity at all.

The

Chap. 64. 273. *Without humility no honor
of the Imitation of Christ.*

The Saints the more brighter in glory, the more humble are they *a*, & *a* 2 cor. 12 the nigher and dearer to mee. Ther- 4.5.10.11 fore shall you find it written, that they cast their Crownes before the throne of God *b*, and with faces toward the ground before the Lamb *c*, worship. c Reue. 5 ped him who liueth for euer and 8.12.13 euer.

Many reason who is greatest in the kingdom of God *d*, which neuer rec- d Mat. 18.1 kon whether they bee themselves to Mar. 9. 32. be counted in the number of the least. Luk. 9.46

In heauen to bee euen the least is a great thing, where all bee great. For all both shall be called *e*, and are *f*, the e Mat. 5.9 children of God. Mar. 6.9

Hee that is least shall become as a f Mat. 13.38 thousand *g*, and hee that is an hun- Mat. 25. 34 dred yeares ould, being a sinner shall *g* Esa. 60 die as a young man *h*. h Esa. 65

For when the disciples demanded 12. who in the kingdom of heauen shold be greatest, they had this answer made them *i*: except ye be conuerted, i Mat. 18 and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen. Whoso euer therefore shall humble himselfe as this little Childe, the same is the greatest in the Kingdom of heauen.

O 5 Woe

k Mat. 7. 13

l Lu. 6. 24

m Mat. 25

41

Lu. 16. 23

n

n Mat. 11

29.

o Mat. 5. 3

Woe then to them who disdain to humble themselves with little ones. For the gate of the kingdom of Heaven is too lowe for them to enter in thereat k : woe also to the rich l, who haue their comforts in this world. For they shall stand howling without m when the poore are entered into th, kingdome of God.

But ye meeke ones n, reioyce ; and bee glad yee poore : For yours is the kingdom of God o, obeying or walking in the truth.

CHAP. LXV.

That all our trust and confidence must bee fixed on GOD alone.

SERVANT.

O My Lord, wherein is my hope fixed in this life ? or what is my greatest comfort a, of all things which are any where vnder the cope of heaven b. It is thou my Lord and GOD, whose mercy is infinite.

a Pl. 100. 6

b Pl. 103 11

Ia. 3. 21. 23

Eccles. 18

3. 4. 5

b Plal. 104

27. 28. 29

When was it with mee either well, if thou wert absent ? or ill, if thou wert present b ?

Doubtlesse I would choole to bee rather

rather poore for thee *e*, than rich with- *e* Mat. 5. 3
out thee *d*: and rather with thee to be *d* Lu. 6. 21
a pilgrime on earth *e*, than without and *d* 16. 24
thee to possesse heauen *f*. *e* Lu. 9. 58.

Where thou art there is heauen *g*, *f* Ela. 14. 12
where thou art not, there is hell, and *g* Psa. 11. 4
destruction *h*. *h* ps. 104. 9

Thou alone art the thing which I *i* pl. 194. 4
desire *i*: therefore need haue I to sigh, and *d* 47. 1
to cry, to pray vnto thee. *k* ps. 50. 25

Finally, I can trust none, that can and *l* 1. 1
duly assist mee in my troubles, but
thee alone my God: thou art mine
hope *l*, thou art my confidence, thou *l* Psa. 10.
art my comforter in all things most *l* 2. 1
faithfull. *m* Phi. 2. 4

All men seeke their owne *m*, but *n* Eze. 18
thou desirest nought but my welfare *n* 31. 32
and profit *n*, and turnest all things for *o* Psa. 119
me to good. *o* 67. 71

In that thou layest me open to ten- *p* wil. 3. 3
rations and troubles, it is all together *p* Joh. 7. 18
for my profit *o*. For thy wont is *a* Ex. 20. 18
thousand waies to try such as thou *Deut. 13*
lovest *p*. In which triall thou oughtest *q* 1. 2, 3
no lesse to be loued and praised, than *Heb. 12*
if thou didst replenish me with all ce- *g* 4. 5
lestiall comforts *q*. *Act. 14. 13*

Wherefore, in thee my Lord, and *q* Ro. 8. 34
God, I place all mine hope, and *r* ps. 31. 1
confidence *r*: on thee, doe I lay all and *71. 1*

my

The third booke

fPsa. 61.1 my calamities and troubles f. For
and 61.7 without thee whatsoever I behold is

sPsa. 102 all fraile and transitory.

24.25.26 For neither can friends profit u.

Mal. 3.6 nor strong men help u, nor wise men

Heb. 1.10 counsell well y, nor learned bookes

31.22 comfort z, nor riches saue u, nor se-

mpsa. 118.8.9 cret places hide b, vnless thou be pre-

2 Mac. 15 sent and helpe, strengthen, comfort,

25.26.27 instruct, and keepe.

Psa. 33.16 For whatsoever seemes to belong

177 to the attainment of peace and fel-

yPsa. 1.2 ty, without thee is nothing, & brings

12.8c. indeed no felicity at all e.

2.1 co. 1.20 So that thou art the chiefest ende,

aLu. 16.32 the perfection of life, and the pro-

bpsa. 147.1 foundnesse of speech, in thee to trust

epsa. 134.29 aboue all things is the chiefest com-

Hos. 13.10 fort of thy seruants.

11 On thee doe I looke e, in thee do I

d1 Cor. trust f, O my God, & father of mer-

35.25 cie g.

ePsa. 25.1 Blesse, make my soule holy with

fPsa. 31.1 celestially happinesse, that it may bee

and 71.1 thy sacred habitation, and fear of o-

g2 cor. 1.3 ternall glory, a Temple pure from all

h1 cor. 3 filthinesse b, which may not offend

16.17 the eyes of thy maiesty.

21 Cor. 6 O Lord, according to the greatnes

19.20 of thy mercy, and according to the

iPsa. 51.1 multitude of thy compassions i look

Chap. 65 277 Done God, and save my
of the Imitation of Christ.

vpon me, and heare the supplication
of thy poore seruant k, liuing farre off k Psa. 54.6
a banished man in a sauage coun- l Gen. 47.9
treyl. He. 11. 13

Protect, and keepe the soule of 14. 15. 16
thy poore seruant m, among so many mpla. 71. 3
dangers of this mortall life, and bring
me by the conduction of thy fauour
into the countrie of eternall glo- m Re. 11. 23
ry n, through the way of o Lu. 1. 79
peace: Amen.

1 Tim. 1. 17

Now vnto the King euerlasting, immor-
tall, inuisible, vnto God onely
wise, be honour & glory
for euer and euer
Amen.

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vse if thou
wilt pray
vnto God,

to a
vnoide

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into three parts, or books, the
first whereof hath 25. Chap.
whose contents be these.

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4 Wisedome must bee vsed in all
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7 Against vaine-hope, and vain-
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